

Marketing requirements for Centres offering non-regulated qualifications under the FQP Scheme

Introduction

Focus Awards is an awarding organisation regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), who are the regulator of qualifications (other than degrees), exams and assessments in England, and of vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.

The Focus on Quality Provision (FQP) scheme offers approved Centres the freedom to develop non-regulated qualifications that meet the needs and requirements of your learners, which are endorsed by Focus Awards.

Each awarding organisation that offer regulated qualifications is subject to Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition which can be found here: [General Conditions of Recognition](#) and although the FQP scheme falls outside of regulated provision we are still subject to Condition B5 'Representations regarding qualifications' and in particular the following:

B5.1 Statements regarding qualifications which are not regulated qualifications

An awarding organisation must not (and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that any person connected with it does not) make any statement that would be likely to lead Users of qualifications to believe that a qualification it makes available is a regulated qualification when it is not a regulated qualification

B5.2 Advertising and promotion of qualifications

An awarding organisation must not (and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that any person connected with it does not) advertise or promote its qualifications in a manner that is likely to be misleading to Users of qualifications.

Therefore, as an approved Centre under the FQP scheme you have a duty to enable us to maintain compliance with the General Conditions of Recognition and you shall be held responsible for the content and accuracy for all of your non-regulated qualification materials; which must adhere to conditions *B5.1 Statements regarding qualifications which are not regulated qualifications* and *B5.2 Advertising and promotion of qualifications*.

This includes all marketing and promotional information which is printed, on your website or in any electronic format.

This guidance booklet sets out the requirements you must adhere to when marketing your non-regulated qualifications under the FQP scheme and also helps you with suggested examples. All non-regulated qualifications that are

endorsed by Focus Awards under the FQP scheme will be subject to these requirements and Focus Awards reserve the right to decide whether or not your marketing or promotional materials is worded in a manner that is likely to mislead learners.

If we deem you are non-compliant with these requirements then we will follow our FQP Sanctions Policy and implement the necessary action plan depending on the severity of the incident.

Marketing requirements for Centres offering
non-regulated qualifications under the FQP Scheme

| Requirement A | |
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| Centres must not include Focus Awards in the non-regulated qualification title. | |
| Rationale | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Non-regulated qualifications offered by Centres under the FQP scheme, must not be confused with Focus Awards nationally recognised QCF qualifications. ➤ The non-regulated qualification does not belong to Focus Awards, but belongs to you as the approved Centre seeking endorsement under the FQP scheme. ➤ Learners could mistake non-regulated qualifications for regulated qualifications as a result of Focus Awards being used in non-regulated qualification titles and descriptions. | |
| Guidance | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Suggested example of a non-regulated qualification title: Level 3 in Dog Grooming. ➤ You are able to insert the following text underneath the non-regulated qualification title or somewhere within the description of what will be studied/assessed: <p>‘This non-regulated qualification has been endorsed under the Focus Awards Focus on Quality Provision (FQP) scheme. Focus Awards endorsement involves a robust and rigorous quality audit by external inspectors to ensure quality is consistently met and that [insert Centre name] has systems and procedures in place to ensure they meet Focus Awards requirements. A regular review of the non-regulated qualifications offered is carried out as part of the endorsement process. This means that [insert Centre name] has passed a comprehensive external quality check to ensure that their systems and procedures meet Focus Awards requirements as part of the FQP scheme. The completion of this non- regulated qualification could be used as evidence of knowledge and skills for the purposes of recognising prior learning if you wish to progress your studies in this sector.</p> <p>At the end of your studies, successful learners will receive a Certificate of Achievement (which includes a Unit Summary) from Focus Awards.</p> ➤ You may want to add within a frequently asked question section: <p>Question - ‘who are Focus Awards?’ Answer- ‘Focus Awards is an awarding organisation regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), who are the regulator of qualifications (other than degrees), exams and assessments in England, and of vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.</p> | |

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| <p>Requirement B</p> <p>Centres must not give a learner cause to believe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the non-regulated qualification that is on offer is a Focus Awards qualification when it is not, • the non-regulated qualification that is on offer is a nationally recognised regulated qualification when it is not. |
| <p>Rationale</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Non-regulated qualifications offered by Centres under the FQP scheme, must not be confused with Focus Awards nationally recognised QCF qualifications. ➤ The non-regulated qualification does not belong to Focus Awards, but belongs to you as the approved Centre seeking endorsement under the FQP scheme. ➤ Learners will mistake non-regulated qualifications for regulated qualifications as a result of Focus Awards being used in non-regulated qualification titles and descriptions. ➤ Non-compliance with the following condition: B5.1 Statements regarding qualifications which are not regulated qualifications <i>An awarding organisation must not (and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that any person connected with it does not) make any statement that would be likely to lead Users of qualifications to believe that a qualification it makes available is a regulated qualification when it is not a regulated qualification.</i> |
| <p>Guidance</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ You may want to add within a frequently asked question section: Question – Is this a nationally recognised qualification? Answer – No, [insert approved Centre name] has been approved as a Focus Awards Centre under the FQP scheme. The certificate of achievement that you will receive from Focus Awards is not a nationally recognised regulated qualification. |
| <p>Requirement C</p> <p>Where relevant, Centres must not imply that the non-regulated qualification will meet industry standards to qualify a learner for employment, or as a practitioner*</p> |
| <p>Rationale</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Claiming a non-regulated qualification will qualify a learner for employment or as a practitioner may confuse a learner to think that the qualification is regulated. In doing so, it could dissuade a learner from undertaking a regulated qualification, which in some cases is the industry standard to qualify a learner to work in the sector and must be completed to certify competence or their knowledge and skills. |

Guidance

- If your non-regulated qualification is an in-house CPD qualification and is recognised by an employer, then as an approved Centre, you must state the name and reference the website of the recognising employer within your learning materials.
- *In sectors where there are no requirements to enter the sector with a regulated qualification, Centres must be clear on how the non-regulated qualification meets industry or sector requirements.

Requirement D

Centres must not state that the non-regulated qualification entitles the learner to Post-Nominals on successful achievement

Rationale

- Non-compliance with the following condition:
B5.2 Advertising and promotion of qualifications
An awarding organisation must not (and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that any person connected with it does not) advertise or promote its qualifications in a manner that is likely to be misleading to Users of qualifications.
- Non-regulated qualifications are not nationally recognised regulated qualifications; therefore do not qualify for post-nominals.

Guidance

- If appropriate, you may wish to add a frequently asked question on this topic

Requirement E

Centres must not compare non-regulated qualifications to other types of regulated qualifications such as NVQs, GCSE's etc... as a means of describing levelling.

Rationale

- Some learners may have limited knowledge of qualifications and how they are accredited and comparing them to other regulated qualifications like NVQs for example, could mislead them to thinking that their non-regulated qualification is regulated when it is not.
- It could also mislead them to thinking that their non-regulated qualification is the same in content and output as the regulated qualification they are being compared to e.g. if compared with an NVQ, learners may think that their non-regulated qualification is a competence based qualification, when clearly it is not.

Requirement F

Centres must ensure that third parties (including re-sellers) adhere to the following:

- Follow all of the above requirements (A-E)
- On request, provide details of the Focus Awards approved

Centre, so that learners know who to contact if they have an appeal etc...

- Provide accurate non-regulated qualification titles, descriptions and what certificates they will receive on successful achievement, including any that the Focus Awards approved Centre will issue.

Rationale

- Ownership of the non-regulated qualifications can be very confusing for learners, especially if re-sellers are involved; who aren't the Focus Awards approved Centre.
- It can lead learners to think that the re-seller is the approved Centre, when they are not.
- It can lead learners to believe that the non-regulated qualifications belong to Focus Awards when they do not, therefore it could mislead them to thinking that it is a regulated qualification when it is not.

Guidance

- If using re-sellers the following guidance must be adopted:
 - **Non-regulated qualification title:** This must not include Focus Awards in the title, for example: Level 3 in Dog Grooming;
 - **Non – regulated qualification description:** Include the following text underneath the non-regulated qualification title or somewhere within the description of what will be studied/assessed:
 'This non-regulated qualification has been endorsed under the Focus Awards Focus on Quality Provision (FQP) scheme. Focus Awards endorsement involves a robust and rigorous quality audit by external inspectors to ensure quality is consistently met and that the provider of origin has systems and procedures in place to ensure they meet Focus Awards requirements. A regular review of the non-regulated qualifications offered is carried out as part of the endorsement process.
 This means that provider of origin has passed a comprehensive external quality check to ensure that their systems and procedures meet Focus Awards requirements as part of the FQP scheme. The completion of such non- regulated qualifications could be used as evidence of knowledge and skills for the purposes of recognising prior learning if you wish to progress your studies in this sector.
 At the end of your studies, successful learners will receive a Certificate of Achievement (which includes a Unit Summary) by Focus Awards'.