



Consultation on Complaints About Awarding Bodies, Regulatory Whistleblowing Policy and Enforcement Powers

Consultation questions

Date of Issue: **Wednesday 15 November 2017**

Action Required: **Responses by 18:00, Wednesday 7 February 2018**

Overview

This consultation seeks views on the following policies:

- Complaints about Awarding Bodies Policy
- Regulatory Whistleblowing Policy
- Taking Action When Things Go Wrong
- Monetary Penalties Policy
- Fee Capping Policy

The consultation is likely to be of interest to awarding bodies, centres, learners and parents/carers.

How to respond

Responses to this consultation can be submitted using this form or via the online form that is available at <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/QWENFORCEMENT/>

Responses should be sent by 18:00 on 7 February 2018 at the latest.

Each of the policies are covered in turn and there are questions on each policy. If a question is not relevant or you are unsure how to respond, please skip that question and move onto the next one.

The responses received will inform the final version of each of the five policies. A report summarising the consultation responses will be published on our website.

Further Information and related documents

Qualifications Wales Act 2015 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/5/contents/enacted>
Regulatory Appeals policy – <http://qualificationswales.org/media/1897/160625-v20-regulatory-appeals-policy-eng.pdf>

Contact details

For further information:

Email: policy@qualificationswales.org

Data protection

How the views and information you provide us will be used

We will analyse and consider all responses received to this consultation. A summary report of the findings will be published on our website. Where appropriate, this report will identify trends in responses and relate these to respondent characteristics.

We may also publish responses in full, if it is deemed relevant to the consultation. Respondents will be asked for consent for their name or organisation name, and postal town to be published alongside their response. However, this is not obligatory. If you are happy to be identified, please indicate this in your consultation response by selecting the box in the 'Personal information' section of your response form.

All personal data that we hold will be retained in accordance with UK Data Protection Law. It will only be used for the purpose of developing and reviewing the policies incorporated in this consultation.

As we are a public body, all the written material we hold, including any correspondence you send to us, may be considered for release following a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The law does allow us to withhold information under some circumstances. If you have not given consent for your name or organisation name and postal town to be published, this will be considered when responding to requests for information. However, there may be rare instances when we must release this information. In these circumstances, we will endeavour to inform you of this decision.

Preamble

The work of Qualifications Wales centres around two principle aims:

- To ensure that qualifications, and the Welsh qualification system, are effective for meeting the reasonable needs of learners in Wales; and
- To promote public confidence in qualifications and the Welsh qualification system.

In order to carry out these functions, the [Qualifications Wales Act 2015](#) (the "Act") gives us a number of powers which allow us to take enforcement action against awarding bodies if needed. Some of our enforcement policies were developed and approved prior to Qualifications Wales being established in September 2015 to enable us to exercise our functions promptly. Other policies have been developed since this time.

For this consultation, we are seeking views on a series of policies regarding our regulatory powers, complaints and whistleblowing. We are presenting these policies together in order to demonstrate the range of actions and information gathering activities that we might use as part of our regulatory role.

This consultation presents five of our policies:

- Complaints About Awarding Bodies Policy
- Regulatory Whistleblowing Policy
- Taking Action When Things Go Wrong
- Fee Capping Policy
- Monetary Penalties Policy

Our aim is for all of these policies to have regard to the [five principles of better regulation](#), devised by the Better Regulation Taskforce. They are:

- Proportionality
- Accountability
- Consistency
- Transparency
- Targeting

It is our intention that undertaking this consultation exercise will help us to ensure that the policies presented meet these principles, thereby improving the quality of our regulation and enforcement.

As a number of the policies have already been published, they state the dates on which they will be reviewed. Although reviews will take place on these dates, the policies will

also be amended following this consultation exercise to incorporate any relevant feedback received.

Complaints About Awarding Bodies policy

This policy covers complaints about a recognised awarding body or about one or more regulated qualifications offered in Wales. The policy describes the types of complaints that may be made and the process for handling complaints.

Version 1 of this policy was published on our website on 30 October 2015. We have amended this policy in order that the procedure for handling complaints is common with that for whistleblowing disclosures.

Regulatory Whistleblowing Policy

This policy establishes clear and transparent protocols for anyone classed as a whistleblower to disclose concerns to us. The policy only covers areas in which we have a legitimate role as outlined within Qualifications Wales Act 2015 or as a prescribed body under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

The

Regulatory Whistleblowing Policy was published on our website on 27 September 2017. We have recently developed this policy and have published this as an interim policy prior to consultation, due to our interest in providing guidance to potential whistleblowers in the interim period. After gathering views in this public consultation, we will consider any proposed changes and publish an amended policy.

Taking Action When Things Go Wrong

This policy is for recognised awarding bodies and for members of the public to enable them to understand how we might use our enforcement and sanctions powers.

Version 1 of this policy was published on our website on 19 July 2016. We have made minor amendments and therefore are including this policy within this consultation to gather views on the policy.

Monetary Penalties Policy

This policy sets out circumstances in which we may impose a monetary penalty and the factors which we will take into account in determining the amount of a penalty to be imposed, including the recovery of our costs.

This policy has not previously been published. Our ability to issue monetary penalties under section 38 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015 will be determined by Regulations yet to be approved by the National Assembly for Wales. We will not publish this policy until such time as these Regulations have been approved by the National Assembly for Wales.

Fee Capping Policy

This policy explains the circumstances in which we may impose a limit on the amount an awarding body may charge in connection with the award of publicly funded qualifications, that are approved or designated by us.

Version 1 of the policy was published on our website on 19 July 2016 We have made minor amendments to this policy and are presenting it for consultation.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Viewing the policies together, is there any further information that we should include in order to clarify our complaints procedures and enforcement powers?

Yes No

If yes, please state what further information is required:

QW will need to review how they handle complainant data in line with GDPR.

2. Would the proposed policies result in any consequences (intended, or unintended) in relation to the following:

	Yes:	No:
(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) individuals or groups who share protected characteristics outlined within the Equality Act 2010 .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If you've answered yes to any of the above, please outline what these consequences might be:

Fee capping has the potential to limit Awarding Body (AB) income and therefore add financial pressures to all areas of AB activity. This could, in theory, limit the resources available for responding to the needs of those who wish to be assessed in the Welsh language/bi-lingually. ABs are committed to those learners who want Welsh language provision but interference in their ability to charge fees that provide sufficient income for activities that support this objective has the potential to damage the range of this provision. Similarly, the imposition of financial penalties could have the same unintended consequences. Qualifications Wales should not underestimate the potential repercussions of any interference by the regulator in the fee setting activity of ABs which is a complex, finely balanced process.

**We have asked a number of specific questions on each of these five policies.
Please use the space below to note any further comments.**

All comments have been included in the relevant sections below.

Complaints About Awarding Bodies Policy – Consultation Questions

Your understanding of the policy

1. Does the policy meet its aim of providing:

a. clarity on the type of complaints we can, and cannot, consider?

Yes No

If no, please state how it could be improved:

If this policy is intended for use by the general public, there are a number of areas that require further clarification:

- In 1.i – are the terms ‘award or certification’ sufficiently clear for a member of the public to understand the difference. Certification is likely to be understood.
- In 1.ii – you refer to a qualification that is being assessed in Wales. Does this policy apply to all qualifications that are assessed in Wales or does it only apply to those qualifications that are within the scope of a recognised AB and being assessed in Wales? Would Qualifications Wales deal with a complaint about a qualification that was outside of an ABs agreed regulatory scope? This needs to be clear. If not, what would be the expected redress for the complainant?
- In 1.iii, sub point I. you state 6 months as a cut-off point. Is the intention that this is applied rigidly? For example, is it the case that a complaint received 6 months and a day later would not be dealt with? It would be useful to be clear about how strictly this cut-off date will be observed.
- In 2.iii – what exceptional circumstances may apply? Some indicative examples would be useful.
- In 2.iv – ‘we consider the complaint to be without merit etc’. This should be explained in more detail. Any decision not to proceed would need to be based on sound evidence.
- Point 2 should also relate back to point 1 and state that you will not deal with a complaint that falls outside of the parameters laid down in point 1.
- Point 5, who can make a complaint – it would be useful to be clear about when a parent/guardian can complain on behalf of their child. This should be limited to children of 18 and below and vulnerable adults. There are GDPR implications here in terms of parental / guardian consent.
- Point 7, confidentiality- presumably where a complainant wants to maintain anonymity and you decide that their identity needs to be shared, you will agree this with the individual prior to sharing it and seek their agreement to sharing their identity?

b. a transparent process for handling complaints?

Yes No

If no, please state how it could be more transparent:

It would be useful to make it clear earlier in the process that a complaint can be submitted in Welsh. You do state it later on in the document but it would be useful to reflect this in point 10.

In point 10, it may also be useful to require the complainant to clarify that they have completed the ABs complaint procedure and provide some information on this and the outcome of the complaint.

Section 2 of the Whistleblowing policy states that the correct procedure for individuals to report concerns or complaints about centres would be via the Complaints policy. However, the Complaints policy does not refer to the Whistleblowing policy in the same way. For the sake of clarity, this policy should direct readers to when they would expect to be dealt with under the terms of the Whistleblowing policy.

Section 15 – please clarify if you will send the draft response to the AO in advance of release, in order that the AO can check for factual accuracy, as Ofqual now does. To be clear, the AO does not have the opportunity to influence the content at this stage.

2. Are there any other aspects of the policy that require further clarification or explanation?

Yes No

If yes, please state which aspects require further clarification or explanation:

Point 19 – reference to referral to the police or CPS seems a little disjointed (not all legislative breaches are criminal offences). Perhaps this would benefit from the inclusion of 'where appropriate to do so'.

In point 20 it would be useful to provide some examples of the exceptional circumstances that might result in the regulator making judgements about a learner's work. How would the regulator ensure appropriate occupational competence, where necessary, in doing so?

The proposed procedures**3. Are the response times stated in the policy, appropriate?**

Yes No

Please use the box below to state the reasons for your response. If you responded 'No', please state what, in your view, an appropriate response time would be:

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If you have any other comments that you would like to feedback to us about this policy, please use the box below:

The Federation has nothing further to add.

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Regulatory Whistleblowing Policy – Consultation Questions

If a question is not relevant or you are unsure, please skip that question and move onto the next one.

Your understanding of the policy
1. Does the policy meet its aim of providing:
a. clarity on the type of disclosures we can, and cannot, consider?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If no, please state how it could be improved: Point 3 refers to 'any qualification that they make available for learners in Wales'. Does this mean any qualification or any qualification that is within the scope of the AB recognition and therefore regulated by Qualifications Wales? Point 12 makes it clear that you cannot act where a qualification is not regulated by you, but this is not consistently clear throughout this policy document or other policy documents that have been included in this consultation.
b. clarity on which of those disclosures would be classed as protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If no, please state how it could be more transparent:
c. A transparent process for handling whistleblowing disclosures?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If no, please state how it could be made clearer: In terms of the confidentiality of a whistleblower's identity (point 11), it would be useful to be clear on whether you will check with the individual before you disclose their identity and whether they can choose to withdraw their allegation at that point and maintain anonymity or whether you will proceed regardless. It is not currently clear what position the whistleblower would be in if you decided you needed to disclose their identity. QW may also wish to consider that in cases where it is not able to reveal a whistleblower's identity this could adversely affect its investigation of the concerns and the regulator may therefore need to adjust the investigation accordingly. Ofqual state in their policy that if a whistleblower wishes to remain anonymous Ofqual 'may not be able to investigate your concerns as effectively'. QW may find it useful to mirror this aspect of the Ofqual policy. We would caution against using any unsubstantiated allegation (i.e. one that did not proceed) as an evidence-base and / or risk indicator.

2. Are there any other aspects of the policy that require further clarification or explanation?

Yes No

If yes, please state which aspects require further clarification or explanation:
We would suggest the AO has the opportunity to review draft responses in advance of release, in relation to factual accuracy only.

The proposed procedures

3. Are the response times stated in the policy appropriate?

Yes No

Please use the box below to state the reasons for your response. If you responded 'No', please state what, in your view, an appropriate response time would be:

If you have any other comments that you would like to feedback to us about this policy, please use the box below:

Point 1, bullet 3 states that a worker of any organisation involved in the development or awarding of a qualification in Wales can be considered to be a whistleblower. However, Point 2 refers only to workers of awarding bodies or centres and does not reflect the wider group previously referred to in Point 1, bullet 3. The policy should be consistent on this matter.

The section title before Point 3, page 18 needs to be corrected.

Taking Action When Things Go Wrong – Consultation Questions

Your understanding of the policy

1. Are there any aspects of the policy that require further clarification or explanation?

Yes No

If yes, please state which aspects require further clarification or explanation:

Point 13 would benefit from greater clarity. ABs need to know what they can expect in terms of publication of enforcement action. The regulator should decide how it will normally proceed in relation to publication and where exceptions may be made. Ofqual usually publishes enforcement action unless the AB can provide evidence of why this would not be beneficial. Qualifications Wales should seek to provide ABs with greater clarity of its position on this matter as the current position as stated in the policy document is too unclear.

We would suggest the AO has the opportunity to review draft responses in advance of release, in relation to factual accuracy only.

3. Do you agree or disagree with the factors that we will take into account before taking regulatory action?

- Yes, I agree with all factors
 I agree with some, but not all factors
 No, I disagree with all factors

Please explain the reasons for your response. If you agree with some or disagree with all, please state which ones, and include any suggestions for how these could be developed further:

Please note any other factors that we should take into account:

Commonly expected regulatory indicators to be used across qualification regulators would be useful. For example, will details on AOs previous non-compliance and / or level of co-operation during an investigation be published / disclosed. We are aware that these have been publicised factors in other AO cases of regulatory intervention in the UK.

If you have any other comments that you would like to feedback to us about this policy, please use the box below:

The Federation has nothing further to add.

Monetary Penalties Policy – Consultation Questions

Your understanding of the policy
1. Does the policy clearly explain the circumstances in which we may impose a monetary penalty notice?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If no, please state what further clarification is needed:
<p>The section of the policy which explains the circumstances in which you may impose a monetary penalty is not fully clear because, as it currently reads, the decision will rely on QWs interpretation of 'substantial detrimental effect'. Some explanation of what will be viewed as 'substantial' is required to provide clarity to ABs about the circumstances in which they may face a monetary penalty. As it is, the policy is too open to interpretation to be fair to ABs.</p> <p>The application of monetary penalties is a substantial power and one that can have serious consequences for ABs and the future of their operations (in Wales and beyond). It is only right and proper that the policy should clearly lay down the types of effects that will be judged to be 'substantial' and be clear that judgments will be objective and evidence-based.</p>
2. Are there any other aspects of the policy that require further clarification or explanation?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please state which aspects require further clarification or explanation:
<p>It is not clear from the policy if any of the communications to ABs will be published. Ofqual currently published its intentions to impose monetary penalties and its confirmation of these penalties. It is not clear whether QW will be implementing a similar approach.</p> <p>'Circumstances in which we may impose a Monetary Penalty notice' section: In consideration of paragraphs 1-4, it may be beneficial to have some examples to provide a clear insight into when Qualifications Wales could impose a monetary penalty notice.</p> <p>Section 19 has been interpreted as referring to interests relating to either an unpaid monetary penalty or recovery costs. However, the wording of Section 19 (i) and 19 (iii) refers to 'costs'. For clarity, it should be explicit as to whether this term includes both monetary penalties and recovery costs.</p>

It is suggested that the phrase 'minimum time frame relative to the date' (s24) is, if possible, replaced with an explicit timescale within which the awarding body can submit an appeal.

3. Do you agree or disagree with the factors that we will take into account when determining the amount of the penalty?

Yes, I agree with all factors []

I agree with some, but not all factors []

No, I disagree with all factors []

Please explain the reasons for your response. If you agree with some or disagree with all, please state which ones, and include any suggestions for how these could be developed further:

The Federation agrees with the factors specified in the policy document. However, there are some factors that would benefit from further clarification:

Factor iv) - we understand that cooperation is important in such circumstances but it would be useful to provide further clarity around what cooperative and non-cooperative behaviour is. It is vital that an AB is able to defend itself and challenge the regulator's assertions without fearing that it will be viewed as being uncooperative. The definition of cooperative in these situations must not make ABs feel that they have no choice other than to acquiesce and agree with the regulator. Also, there needs to be some assurance that the regulator will provide the AB with reasonable time to respond to requests for information. Where unreasonable timescales are provided an AB may not be able to respond for very pragmatic reasons; not because they are being uncooperative.

Factor v) is not currently clear on whether the factors to be taken into account in deciding whether to apply a monetary penalty includes monies paid out already by an AO to learners or other parties directly affected by the breach. This should be clarified, to the effect that any monies already paid out should mitigate any decision to apply a financial penalty or, if one is applied, mitigate its size.

Factor xii) states that any previous history of non-compliance will be taken into account when determining the amount of a monetary penalty. Does this mean ANY non-compliance at all, including those reported by the AB in its annual statement of compliance? It is important to be clear about exactly what will be considered and to ensure that this does not act as a disincentive to ABs to share information with the regulator.

Please note any other factors that we should take into account:

In Factor v) the regulator should also consider the amount the AB has already invested in rectifying/preventing any recurrence of the breach and any attempts made to recompense / compensate those potentially affected.

If you have any other comments that you would like to feedback to us about this policy, please use the box below:

It is difficult to comment on a policy in the absence of a key piece of information; the cap on monetary penalties. The Welsh Government still needs to decide upon the level of this cap. It is therefore not clear what level the penalties could be set at and on what basis they will be calculated. For example, will the penalty be 10%, 12%, 15% of turnover, is that turnover in Wales or in total etc. This is a crucial piece of information that is not currently available.

It is also important that the regulator ensures that its regulations are clear and that it is fair to expect the AB to be compliant. The starting point must be clear regulations that are consistently applied by the regulator. We welcome the work to consider the Standard Conditions of Recognition and clarify aspects of these requirements. Until this work is completed it would seem unfair to impose any monetary penalties for any breaches, other than those that can be shown to be deliberate.

In relation to the recovery of enforcement costs, the policy should commit the regulator to a value for money analysis of expenditure before it is undertaken to ensure that ABs are not required to pay for activity that was not good value for money. The regulator should also commit to providing a detailed breakdown of these costs to the AB so the AB can see clearly what costs have been incurred for various activities related to imposing the monetary penalty.

In relation to the appeal to the First Tier Tribunal (FTT), the footnote on page 39 states that 'arrangements for access to the FTT are being made as part of the development of this regulatory power.' The Federation would anticipate that these arrangements would be finalised before this policy is implemented to ensure there is a clear route to appeal for ABs.

It is not currently clear whether the First-tier Tribunal has the power to impose a different or an additional sanction in cases where Qualifications Wales imposes a fine (as is stipulated in Ofqual's Regulatory Action policy (version 2, May 2012). The policy would benefit from clarification to ensure parity across the regulators.

The flow diagram on page 41 needs to be amended as some of the arrows do not represent the correct flow of activities:

- There needs to be a flow from 'appeal to FTT' to 'Tribunal confirms/varies monetary penalty notice.'
- There should not be an arrow from 'Payment made to Welsh Consolidated Fund' to 'Tribunal confirms....'.
- There should not be an arrow from 'Payment made to Welsh Consolidated Fund' to 'Appeal withdrawn'.

Fee Capping Policy – Consultation Questions

Your understanding of the policy
1. Is it clear from the policy what is meant by 'fee capping'?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If no, please provide any suggestions for how it could be made clearer
<p>The Federation understands that Qualifications Wales has the legal power to undertake fee capping activity. However, we do not believe this is a power that should be exercised often, if ever. Awarding bodies know and understand their costs, the markets they operate in, the competition they face and how fees interrelate across qualification portfolios and are, therefore, best placed to make decisions about the levels of fees they should charge in the market.</p> <p>In relation to the draft policy it is not clear whether 'fee capping' refers to the charges made by awarding bodies for learner registration and certification only or whether the capping activity can extend to all fees related to the provision of the qualification e.g. the provision of learner support materials, external quality assurance visits etc. The scope of fee capping should be clearly stated in a clear definition so that ABs know exactly what may/may not be capped.</p> <p>It's also not currently clear if the fee capping will only relate to a type/description of qualification, or an individual awarding body's qualifications. If the former, this could prove challenging if awarding bodies have different fee structures and services/packages to each other and could have an impact on their income if their fees are unfairly capped. Currently, there is a competitive market that offers choice to users; if a fee capped condition was introduced it could have a significant impact on some awarding bodies' resources to be able to 'comply' with such a condition. The reference would benefit from clarification to avoid any confusion.</p>
2. Are there any other aspects of the policy that require further clarification or explanation?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please state which aspects require further clarification or explanation: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1- As stated above, the extent of the range of fees that can be capped should be clearly stated in the policy.2- In 5 ii) you refer to 'similar qualifications'. It is not clear how you will judge qualifications to be 'similar', especially in a post-QCF world. Is it similar in subject area, size, assessment methodology, all of these factors? It should be clearly stated what is meant by 'similar'.

3. Do you agree or disagree with the factors that we will take into account when setting the limit specified in a fee capping condition?

- Yes, I agree with all factors
 I agree with some, but not all factors
 No, I disagree with all factors

Please explain the reasons for your response. If you agree with some or disagree with all, please state which ones, and include any suggestions for how these could be developed further:

The Federation agrees with the factors to be considered but feels they would benefit from further clarification, as outlined in our response to Q2 above.

Section 7 (Fee Capping Policy): As it stands, the reference to 'general limit' seems vague and we would welcome clarity on what it means to determine any impact on awarding bodies.

Please note any other factors that we should take into account:

The Federation believes that Qualifications Wales would need to consider the fees associated with a qualification as part of a broader portfolio of provision by the AB. It is not uncommon for ABs to 'subsidise' the provision of a more niche qualification through the income generated by another qualification with a bigger market. By disrupting the fee structure for one qualification, QW could destabilise other parts of the ABs portfolio and this could have unintended consequences in other parts of the qualifications market in Wales.

4. Do you agree or disagree with the factors that we will take into account to determine the duration of a fee capping condition?

- Yes, I agree with all factors
 I agree with some, but not all factors
 No, I disagree with all factors

Please explain the reasons for your response. If you agree with some or disagree with all, please state which ones, and include any suggestions for how these could be developed further:

The factors stated cover the areas the Federation would expect to be considered in deciding the duration of a fee cap.

Please note any other factors that we should take into account:

The Federation has nothing further to add.

If you have any other comments that you would like to feedback to us about this policy, please use the box below:

Point 7 refers to the application of a general limit on all ABs in respect of a qualification or description of qualification. The Federation would not welcome a fee cap or limit being placed on any AB in the market. However, if Qualification Wales decides to exercise this power we believe it is essential that no AB is disadvantaged in the market place by the imposition of a cap that is not also applied to its competitors in the market.

Point 8 refers to consulting ABs before the imposition of a fee capping condition and the Federation would welcome a commitment to a minimum consultation period in such circumstances. We would recommend a 12-week period as a minimum to allow ABs a reasonable opportunity to consider the matter and provide an evidence-based response.

The policy does not state what action will be taken if an AB does not act in line with a fee cap. The addition of a link to the Regulatory Action Policy might be of use.

Additional Information

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or as an individual (If you select that you are responding on behalf of an organisation, we will assume that you have permission for your responses to be considered as representations of your organisation).

On behalf of the organisation

Individual

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please select the option below that best describes your organisation (if applicable):

Awarding body

Education or training provider

Other (please specify)

The Federation of Awarding Bodies is the trade association for vocational and technical awarding organisations (AOs) with over 125 organisations in full membership ranging from large generic awarding bodies to those working in specific occupational areas, including professional bodies.

Many of our members operate in Wales, as well as in other parts of the UK, and are recognised by Qualifications Wales. The policies Qualifications Wales has in place impact on awarding bodies and we therefore have an interest in the consultation relating to the draft Regulatory Policies and Procedures and we welcome the opportunity to comment on the consultation proposals.

This response is submitted on behalf of the Federation's membership following consultation with them and with the Federation's Board of Directors. However, awarding bodies are a diverse community and our members may wish to make their own individual submissions containing their own perspectives and emphases, in addition to any comments forwarded to the Federation for inclusion in this overall response.

We may publish responses in full, if it is deemed relevant to the consultation. (Please see the section on data protection in the consultation document). In these circumstances, we would publish the name and postal town of the respondent. If you are happy for these details to be published alongside your response, please select 'yes' below. If not, please leave this question blank.

'Yes, I am happy to be identified' [X]

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