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Registered in England and Wales. Registered no. 9480912



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RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

1. SCOPE

CCL recognises that learners may begin a programme of learning with some previous experience. This policy is designed to provide guidance regarding recognition of prior learning (RPL) so that learners can achieve without duplicating any previous learning or assessment they have undertaken.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy applies to all who delivery training or qualifications on behalf of CCL.
CCL Directors are responsible for maintenance, review and improvement of this policy.

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES

We have identified the following principles which underpin all RPL assessments:

- Validity ensures assessment measures what it claims to measure, the evidence match the competences, the skills, knowledge and expertise that are being demonstrated by the learner at the appropriate level.
- Reliability refers to the accuracy with which an assessment is measured. A reliable assessment consistently gives the same results under similar conditions ensuring different assessors place a similar value on the evidence provided and make similar judgments when confronted with the same evidence.
- Authenticity refers to the ownership of the evidence. Assessors need to be confident that the work submitted really is the result of the learners' own effort and expertise.
- Currency refers to the date of the evidence. Assessors must be sure that the evidence submitted by the learner is recent enough to be considered a measure of the current levels of competence.
- Sufficiency is the amount of evidence to cover all the aspects of the required criteria There must be enough evidence to fully meet the requirements of the learning outcome, or learning outcomes being considered.
- A fair assessment, in addition to being valid and reliable, provides equity of opportunity for learners in line with Equality legislation.
- Quality is a key principle in ensuring the credibility and status of CCL accreditation.

4. WHAT IS RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet assessment requirements through the knowledge, understanding or practical skills that they already possess.

Using RPL for the recognition of non-formal or informal learning involves a review of past experiences. It also includes learning gained through training in the workplace, the community and in the voluntary sector.

RPL does not cover previously certificated learning which is recognised as part of credit accumulation and transfer.

RPL can be used where learners can demonstrate that through their experience, they have already gained the relevant knowledge and or practical skills required.



People can gain a range of knowledge and skills through reflecting on their experience in order to identify relevant achievement. They should think about experience gained at work, in any relevant voluntary work and leisure activities, formal or informal education and training (for example, adult education courses; in-company training); or from independent study.

Where evidence presented in support of a claim of RPL is strongly convincing, it may be deemed sufficient for the purpose of certification. If the evidence is less convincing, but nevertheless substantial, the learner might, where suitable:

- Undergo an oral assessment.
- Complete an appropriate assignment.
- Complete a written test.
- Carry out a demonstration.
- A combination of the above.

5. USING RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

RPL is appropriate for use where an individual's learning has not been formally recognised. It enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a whole qualification.

The knowledge, understanding and/or skills in question may have been acquired in any area of life, for example, domestic / family life, education and training, work-related activities, community or voluntary activities. As long as all the composite learning outcomes have been met, an individual can claim a qualification where RPL has been used to generate all or some of the evidence required.

In order to achieve recognition of achievement there are two options open to the learner:

- Undertake the same assessments as those following the formal course of learning and assessment that lead to the desired qualification. These assessments may be undertaken without attending the teaching sessions.
- Submit a portfolio of evidence based on previous learning, skills and / or competence cross referenced to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for which RPL is being sought.

CCL endeavour to engage instructors/assessors with appropriate expertise and knowledge to facilitate RPL. All relevant evidence is assessed against the assessment criteria before decisions are confirmed. In assessing using RPL the assessor/instructor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the required standard.

CCL will keep appropriate records of RPL evidence.



6. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING PROCESS

The RPL assessment should be carried out as an entire process. This means that the assessor/instructor should:

- Plan with the learner.
- Make a formal assessment decision.
- Feedback assessment decisions to the learner, confirming decision and giving guidance on the available options.
- Maintain records of assessment.
- Ensure relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed through verification procedures.
- Ensure that learners are aware of their right to access the appeals process should they feel the assessment decision was unfair.
- Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures.
- The process is subject to the same quality assurance requirements as any other assessment method.

7. RECORD KEEPING

CCL will ensure all relevant evidence is kept securely and can be audited to ensure all learners have been entered onto the relevant training or qualification pathway. A risk register or log will be kept.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually.



DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY POLICY

Introduction

Certhia Consulting Limited, hereafter CCL, is committed to handling the information you entrust to us in a secure and responsible manner. This Privacy Policy relates to our use of any personal information we collect from you via our website, social media and events. It also covers any data collected via email, over the phone, via post, or in person.

CCL is the Data Controller and Data Processor of any personal information you provide to us. The information you supply will be used to provide our business-specific services to you. We collect personal data only when necessary and we will never sell, rent or otherwise distribute any of your personal information for financial purposes.

CCL is a limited company whose registered office is at Ramsbury House, Charnham Lane, Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 0EY (company number 9480912).

CCL is a registered data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office (UK) [ICO].

What information do we collect and how?

We collect:

- Information you provide to us. For example, this might be through the booking of a training course or details of your property relevant to your planning application.
- Information on what you view or access on our website.
- We may also collect data where you have consented for other organisations to lawfully share data with us.

How do we use your information?

We use the information we collect for the following:

- To provide you with services related to your training or consultancy requirements.
- To reply to any questions, complaints or queries.
- To allow us to maintain our statutory records to fulfil our legal and regulatory obligations.

Who do we share data with?

Occasionally CCL may provide limited data to third parties that provide related products and services. These may include:

- Event organisers, venues, Health and Safety staff and medical staff if you are participating in a training event.
- Contractors and consultants that provide a service to us or act as our agents on the understanding that they keep the information confidential.
- A body to whom we may transfer our rights and duties under any agreement we have with you.
- The Police, local authorities or H.M.R.C, the courts or any other Government body if lawfully requested and legally obliged to do so.



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Legal basis for processing

The legal basis for the processing of your data relates to the information provided and the context in which it was collected.

We will only use your information where

- We have your consent to do so.
- We need the personal information to perform a contract e.g. your email address.

Managing your information

You can access, correct, update or request deletion of your personal information at any time by contacting us.

Deletion of data will be carried out on the understanding that removal of some information cannot be deleted e.g. address information attached to invoices as financial information must be held for 7 years for tax purposes.

You can request that we restrict processing of your personal information, object to processing of your information or request portability of your personal information.

For these requests please email us at info@certhia.co.uk, or write to us at Ramsbury House, Charnham Lane, Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 0EY or telephone 01672 540833. We will comply with your request in accordance with the applicable law.

If we have collected and processed your personal information with your consent, the you can withdraw your consent at any time by emailing info@certhia.co.uk stating your name and the email address you used.

Accuracy of information

In order to provide you with a high standard of customer service, we need to keep accurate personal data about you. We take all reasonable steps to ensure its accuracy and will carefully consider any challenges to the accuracy of the information. We also take into consideration when it is necessary to update that information, such as name or address changes, and you can help us by informing us of these changes when they occur.

If you have any worries or complaints about the way we use your information, please get in touch with us. We'll do our best to set your mind at ease. And, if you feel we are not meeting the high standards that we expect of ourselves, you are within your rights to tell the UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

This policy is reviewed and updated annually.



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MALPRACTICE AND MALADMINISTRATION POLICY

1. SCOPE

This policy describes how suspected or alleged incidents of malpractice and/or maladministration are dealt with by Certhia Consulting Limited [hereafter 'CCL'] where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion or allegation.

This policy is designed to ensure that any such incidents are prevented where possible, and thoroughly investigated with appropriate action taken where malpractice/maladministration is suspected or alleged.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy applies to all those who work for or are contracted to undertake work, paid or unpaid, on behalf of CCL. This can include instructors, invigilators or assessors, associates, partners or sub-contractors.

3. DEFINITIONS

Malpractice covers any deliberate actions, neglect, wrongdoing, misconduct or other practice that compromises, or could compromise the integrity of the training and/or assessment and validity of results. For example, the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

Maladministration is any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the inefficient, dishonest or just bad administration or management which may or may not be deliberate. For example, breach of security or confidentiality of assessment materials including loss or theft, persistent mistakes and inaccurate learner records.

3.1 Types of malpractice (examples)

- Insecure storage of assessments and learner evidence.
- Misuse of assessment documents including inappropriate adjustments.
- Improper/excessive assistance to learners to aid their achievement .
- Deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.
- Plagiarism of another's work.
- Cheating during assessment.
- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment or examination material.
- Impersonating a candidate (i.e. claiming to be someone other than yourself).
- Submitting false claims for certificates or skills identity cards.
- False ID used at the registration stage.

3.2 Types of maladministration (examples)

- Persistent late learner registrations and certificates.
- Registering learners for the wrong training or qualification.
- Inaccurate claim for certificates.
- Failure to maintain appropriate records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence for assessments.
- Withholding of information, by deliberate act or omission.
- Misuse of CCL, logo and trademark.



- Misuse of Awarding Organisation, Accrediting body or regulators logo and trademark.
- Failure to the requirements of reasonable adjustments and special considerations.
- Failure to provide adequate training, systems and processes or relevant knowledge to anyone directly involved in the process.

4. DEALING WITH MALPRACTICE AND MALADMINISTRATION

4.1 Identification

CCL has appropriate systems and processes in place to identify and effectively deal with malpractice which include:

- Ongoing quality assurance and audits.
- Through complaints or feedback received.
- Whistleblowing (laws protect specific items).
- Information from other sources.

4.2 Response

In a case of suspected malpractice or maladministration CCL will review the information presented and decide whether it is appropriate to take no further action or to investigate. CCL will make an initial response in writing within 5 working days.

4.3 Investigation

The fundamental principle of investigation is to conduct them in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring that all relevant information is considered without bias. Incidents will be investigated as follows:

- Establish the facts relating to allegations/complaints in order to determine whether any irregularities have occurred.
- Identify the cause of the irregularities and those involved.
- Establish the scale of the irregularities.
- Notify parties concerned and request an account of the incident.
- Gather relevant information from records held – these may include registration data, assessment records or any other information deemed relevant to the investigation.
- Consult with others in order to get a full picture if necessary.
- Undertake further discussions including face to face meetings if deemed necessary.
- Determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered learners and to preserve the integrity of the training or qualification.
- Identify and, if necessary, take action to minimise any risks.
- Ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued.
- Identify any changes to policies and procedures.
- Identify any adverse patterns or trends.

4.4 Outcomes

Where investigations establish that malpractice/maladministration has in fact occurred CCL will take appropriate action. Such actions will be proportionate to the gravity and scope of the occurrence and may include the following:

- The implementation of corrective action plans to prevent re-occurrence.
- Additional monitoring.
- Suspending or removing course registration.



- Suspending or removing contract.
- Withdrawal of certificates.
- Imposing other sanctions as appropriate.

4.5 Malpractice and maladministration process and timescales from notification

- Report any malpractice or maladministration to a Director of CCL.
- Acknowledge response of a malpractice or maladministration within 5 working days.
- Investigation and gathering of evidence 15 working days.
- Outcome letter within 20 working days of the acknowledgement.

4.6 Appeals

Everyone has the right to appeal where a case of malpractice or maladministration has been upheld. Further details may be found within CCL's Appeal Policy.

- An appeal against a malpractice or maladministration decision must be submitted in writing to CCL within 5 working days of the decision.
- The appeal will be investigated by an appropriately qualified impartial individual. A written response will be given to all reasonable written appeals (letter or email) within a maximum of *10 working days from the receipt of the appeal. If this time needs to be extended the applicant will be advised in writing of a predicted reply date.
- The decision will be final.

[*If this time needs to be extended the applicant will be advised in writing of a predicted reply date].

4.7 Reporting

CCL will record incidents of malpractice and maladministration via a risk register to identify and monitor any recurrent issues or trends. Awarding Organisations and Regulators will be advised of all cases.

5. ADVERSE EFFECT

CCL will take all reasonable steps to prevent any potential adverse effect to any incident that may arise. Where an incident brings the outcome of other results into serious question this would be considered a potential 'adverse effect' as other learners may be affected.

In such cases CCL will:

- Identify any other learner who has been affected.
- Correct or mitigate the effect as far as possible – for example adjusting marks.
- Take action to avoid a re-occurrence – this may include removal of instructors/assessors.

Examples of adverse effects:

- There is a substantial error in training or assessment materials.
- There has been a loss or theft of, or breach of confidentiality in training or assessment materials.
- Incorrect certificates have been issued. Certificates will be revoked if the result on the certificate is false because of malpractice or maladministration.



An act, omission, event, incident, or circumstance has an adverse effect if it:

- Gives rise to prejudice to learners or potential learners or
- Adversely effects:
 - o The ability of CCL to undertake the development, delivery or award of the training or qualifications.
 - o The standards of the training or qualifications.
 - o Public confidence in the training or qualifications.

CCL will mitigate risks that have the potential to cause an adverse effect to learners. All incidents will be logged and maintained on CCL's risk register to ensure the issue is highlighted managed and mitigated against.

CCL will inform where appropriate any malpractice/maladministration and adverse effects to the appropriate relevant parties including Awarding Organisation, Accrediting Body or Regulator. Contact details for a regulator or a regulated Awarding Organisation can be obtained from the following regulators website.

- International Society of Arboriculture [ISA] Email : isa@isa-arbor.com Tel:+1.217.355.9411
- Lantra Awards Tel:02476 6996 Technical Liaison Sector Schemes and Malpractice
- Ofqual <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>

This policy is reviewed and updated annually.



CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

1. STATEMENT

Conflicts of interest arise when there is an influence or appear to be influence by personal and professional interests. A conflict of interest occurs when an individual or organisation is involved in multiple interests, one of which could possibly corrupt the motivation for an act in the other.

This policy applies to all Certhia Consulting Limited [hereafter 'CCL'] employees, as well as "subcontractors" acting on behalf of CCL through a third party arrangement; this may be for paid or unpaid work. Sub-contractors includes external quality assurers, instructors, assessors, internal quality assurers and those involved in training and qualification development, authors, consultants, committee or Board members.

CCL employees, as well as a "sub-contractors" acting on behalf of CCL through a third party arrangement have an obligation to:

- Act in the best interests of CCL.
- Declare any personal or business interests which may conflict with their responsibilities.
- Ensure a conflict of interest will be recorded and reported, outlining the nature and extent of the conflict, and actions taken to manage the conflict.
- Not misuse official positions or information acquired in official duties to further private interests or those of others if they are responsible for money or financial matters, directly or indirectly, or in handling contracts.
- Perform duties fairly and impartially and ensure that decisions are not affected by self-interest and/or personal gain.
- Take personal responsibility for actions.
- Never hide or ignore a conflict of interest or gain personally from an opportunity encountered.
- Report all conflicts of interests that cannot be avoided and arrange for persons to participate in their resolution or management.

Having a conflict of interest is sometimes unavoidable. People and companies will not be adversely treated just for having a conflict of interest, unless conduct in dealing with it is corrupt, criminal or otherwise demonstrates lack of integrity.

Action should only be considered where an individual or sub-contractor:

- Fails to identify a conflict (where they can be reasonably expected to identify it).
- Fails to avoid a conflict that could have been avoided.
- Fails to report an unavoidable conflict.
- Takes action on a conflict to benefit their personal or private interests.
- Fails to co-operate in the management of a conflict.
- Fails to comply with the policy.

The risks associated with conflicts cannot always be eliminated. CCL operates a risk register that captures and minimises risks to an acceptable level. The risk register is monitored on a regular basis.



2. PRINCIPLES

- Employee ownership: Disclosing a conflict, or updating the disclosure as things change over time is every employee and sub-contractor's responsibility.
- Compliance oversight and objectivity: The role of compliance is the responsibility of the Directors of CCL who ensure independent and consistent reviews and responses.
- System of record: CCL holds conflict of interest declarations for employees and subcontractors. This also includes a declaration where no conflict of interest exists.
- Clear communication: CCL encourages employees and sub-contractors that disclosing conflicts is the best solution, so it can be managed and transparent.

3. POLICY

The policy outlines:

- The meaning of a conflict of interest.
- Identifies the conceivable areas where a perceived or real conflict of interest is a possibility.
- Communicates the responsibilities for identifying, managing and documenting real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of CCL. Such conflicts may create problems that can:

- Inhibit free discussion.
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of CCL.
- Risk creating the impression that CCL has acted improperly.

Types of conflicts of interest

There are three main types of conflicts of interest: actual, perceived and potential. Each of these presents the same personal and organisational risks and therefore need to be managed appropriately. If you are unsure if a conflict exists, you should discuss the matter with a CCL Director.

- Actual conflict of interest. Where a conflict exists between your responsibilities and your private interests.
- Perceived conflict of interest. Where it could be seen by others that your private interests could improperly interfere with or influence your responsibilities, whether or not this is in fact the case.
- Potential conflict of interest. Where your private interests could interfere with or influence your responsibilities in the future.

Assessing your situation

Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances. In assessing whether a conflict of interest may arise, there are a number of factors relating to your private interests to be considered. It is impossible to list every potential conflict of interest relating to CCL activity.

Some examples include where an employee or sub-contractor:

- Has a position of authority in one organisation that conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation.
- Carries out work on behalf of CCL but may have personal interests (paid or unpaid) in another business which either uses CCL products or services or produces similar products.



- Secondary employment which is perceived as a conflict of interest with CCL activity.
- Makes a media comment that is perceived as a conflict of interest.
- Provides a character reference that results in a conflict of interest.
- Has an interest in a family or private business.
- Has a secondary employment commitment.
- Is a director who is also an examiner or provider.
- Has close relatives which may conflict with their status as a director, examiner, assessor, instructor, quality assurer, verifier, member of staff.
- Interests of one job held by an individual contradicts another job held by that same individual (e.g. a person working for two competing organisations).
- Has purchased goods or services from a relative of an individual or a company controlled by a relative.

CCL is committed to identifying, managing, recording and, where relevant, disclosing actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interests. The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any real or perceived or potential impropriety.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Managing conflicts of interest is a shared responsibility that requires CCL to work together with employees and sub-contractors involved with any activity connected with CCL resources and services, to identify and implement solutions to resolve any conflicts. All employees and sub-contractors who carry out services for CCL whether paid or unpaid will strive to avoid any conflict of interest. A failure of either party to appropriately contribute to the management of a conflict of interest is a potential misconduct issue that may result in management action, including removal /dismissal from CCL.

To manage conflicts of interest effectively CCL will:

- Provide advice and guidance when a conflict of interest is identified.
- On receiving a disclosure of a conflict of interest, record the conflict of interest and make appropriate enquiries to allow a thorough risk assessment to occur.
- Assess the risks associated with the conflict of interest.
- Consult with the individual involved and identify solutions appropriate to the risk level.
- Manage the conflict of interest with the cooperation of the individual involved.
- Monitor the conflict of interest for the individual, or until it is resolved.

Under Company Law a “connected person” includes the following:

- Family members (including spouse or civil partner).
- Corporate bodies.
- Committee members of a trust.
- Business partner.

It is unlikely that conflicts of interest can be completely avoided. However, the conflict should be managed to avoid any adverse effect on the organisation and to promote maximum accountability and transparency in the organisation’s affairs.



5. INDIVIDUAL PROCEDURE

IDENTIFY While it remains the responsibility of the individual to identify conflicts of interest, other circumstances may lead to the identification of a conflict of interest including:

- Complaint investigations;
- Information from colleagues;
- Other sources.

If a conflict of interest is not self-reported by an individual and comes to the attention of CCL by other means, consideration should be given as to why they did not self-report and whether it is reasonable to expect that they should have.

AVOID You are required to take reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest where possible. This includes:

- Abstaining from involvement in official decisions and actions that could be compromised by your personal interests, affiliations and associations.
- Avoiding activities where you could be seen to accrue an advantage from inside information because of your duties.
- Not using your position for your own personal gain or the gain of others close to you.
- Ensuring that there can be no real or perceived benefit that may influence the performance of your duties.
- Not taking advantage of your position or access to privileged information.

REPORT Where a conflict of interest cannot be avoided you must report the conflict by raising a disclosure to CCL.

MANAGE Once you have reported a conflict of interest the risk is shared with CCL. CCL will work with you to identify and implement an appropriate solution for dealing with the conflict.

MONITOR Monitoring the conflict is essential to ensure that any changes are accounted for and dealt with.

Even if you have already reported a conflict of interest and think it has been resolved, you might find circumstances where the conflict arises again, or affects you in another way. If there are any changes, or the conflict arises again, you must report the conflict again to ensure that it is resolved appropriately.

6. MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

RECORD Conflict of interest disclosure is raised to CCL.

ASSESS CCL undertakes a risk assessment of the disclosure and in doing so, they consider the likelihood and consequence of the:

- reliability of the source and validity of information;
- recent contact or involvement with the conflict of interest;
- location and nature;
- previous issues regarding integrity and conduct of the individual;
- reputation of CCL;
- frequency, method and type of contact;
- willingness to report and acknowledge the conflict of interest.



IDENTIFY CCL identifies if the disclosure is cleared with conditions or no conditions.

MANAGE The disclosure is managed and controlled through CCL risk register. CCL will identify and implement an appropriate management solution for dealing with the conflict by applying either a restrict or relinquished action.

MONITOR The disclosure is monitored by CCL. Monitoring the conflict is essential to ensure that any changes are accounted for and dealt with.

- All potential conflicts of interest are recorded.
- Any potential high-risk conflicts of interest are identified on CCL's risk register and elevated to the Directors.
- Control measures are listed against each risk identified.
- Monitoring of conflicts is continuous.
- The conflict of interest policy is reviewed and updated annually.

7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

CCL employees, as well as "sub-contractors" acting on behalf of CCL through a third party arrangement, have an obligation to declare any conflicts of interests at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion or activity. The same applies if you face a conflict for any other reason. You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal to all, or where your benefit is minimal. Any gifts or hospitality received in connection with CCL activity must be declared to CCL.

Gifts and hospitality:

- All gifts and hospitality should be declared and recorded.
- The information recorded should include its estimated value, the date on which it was received, who it was given by and the reason for the gift.
- Gifts and hospitality should never be solicited.
- Gifts and hospitality with a nominal value [for example, flowers and chocolates] can be accepted but only if the gifts are not given or received with an expectation that there is an obligation owed as a result of the gift.
- If a gift is received that exceeds the nominal value, the gift should be returned to the sender, the market price should be paid, or the gift should be donated to a charitable organisation.
- Gifts and hospitality intended to influence organisational decision making should NEVER be accepted.

All individuals employed or contracted by CCL must raise a declaration whether it holds a disclosure or nothing to declare.

8. EXAMPLE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ACTIONS

CCL will take all reasonable steps to make sure that no conflicts of interest have an adverse effect and/or that such effects are mitigated as far as possible. When a disclosure is raised CCL will apply either a restricted or relinquished action.



Restrict action is most appropriately applied when the employee or sub-contractor can be effectively separated from parts of an activity or process including restricting the:

- Involvement in critical criteria setting or decision making.
- Involvement in operations.
- Involvement in the development of assessment.
- Involvement in the development of materials.
- Access to information and confidential information.

Relinquish action is a very effective management solution that involves the relinquishing of the personal interest(s) that gives rise to the conflict. Depending on the nature of the conflict, this option might involve:

- Relinquish relationship with a person, organisation or group.
- Gifts are given to charitable organisation.
- Remove status of sub-contractor.

Example of conflicts	Action
Has a position of authority in one organisation that conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation	Restricted action
Carries out work CCL's behalf, but may have personal interests (paid or unpaid) in another business which either uses CCL products or services, or produces similar products	Restricted or Relinquish action
Secondary employment which is perceived as a conflict of interest	Restricted or Relinquish action
Makes a media comment that is perceived as a conflict of interest	Relinquish action
Provides a character reference that results in a conflict of interest	Relinquish action
Has an interest in a family or private business	Restrict action
Has a secondary employment commitment	Restrict action
Is a director who is also an examiner, assessor, instructor	Restrict action
Has close relatives which may conflict with their status as a director, examiner, assessor, instructor	Restrict action
Interests of one job held by an individual contradicts another job held by that same individual (e.g. a person working for two competing organisations)	Restrict action
Has purchased goods or services from a relative of an individual or a company controlled by a relative	Restrict action
Where an individual has personal interests that conflict with CCL training or qualifications	Restrict action



Example of conflicts	Action
Where an individual is writing training or assessments for CCL and works for a provider who delivers CCL training or qualifications	Restricted action
An assessment and internal quality assurance activity is undertaken by the same person	Restricted action
Where an individual is internally marking assessments of a learner who is a friend or relative	Restricted action
Where an individual carries out work on CCL's behalf, but may have personal interests (paid or unpaid) in another business which uses CCL training or qualifications	Restricted action

9. ADVERSE EFFECT

CCL will take all reasonable steps to prevent any potential adverse effect to any incident that may arise. Where an incident brings the outcome of other results into serious question this would be considered a potential 'adverse effect' as other learners may be affected.

An act, omission, event, incident, or circumstance has an adverse effect if it: -

- Gives rise to prejudice to learners or potential learners or
- Adversely effects:
 - o The ability of CCL to undertake the development delivery or award of the training or qualifications.
 - o The standards of the training or qualifications.
 - o Public confidence in the training or qualifications.

CCL will mitigate risks that have the potential to cause an adverse effect to learners. All incidents will be logged and maintained on CCL risk register to ensure the issue is highlighted managed and mitigated against.

Where appropriate CCL will inform any conflict of interest and adverse effects to the appropriate relevant parties including Awarding Organisation, Accrediting Body or Regulator.

Contact details for a regulator or a regulated Awarding Organisation can be obtained from the following regulators' websites.

- International Society of Arboriculture [ISA] Email : isa@isa-arbor.com Tel:+1.217.355.9411
- Lantra Awards Tel:02476 6996 Technical Liaison Sector Schemes and Malpractice
- Ofqual <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>



Notification to External Parties of an Adverse Effect (Example Form)

Title of notification:			
Raised by:		Date Raised:	
Details of notification or adverse effect:			
Summary of change or adverse effect:			
Impact Analysis:			
Implications and relationships			
Details of consultation internal and external stakeholders (Enter details of the consultation that has taken place to ensure that all parties have been consulted)			
Internal approval and level of priority:			
	Priority 1 = Mission critical problem resolution, immediate response required 1-2 weeks		
	Priority 2 = High importance, no workaround -1 month		
	Priority 3 = Important, workaround is available – 1-3 months		
	Priority 4 = Low importance – 3 -6 months’ plus		
Authorised Signature:		Business Deadline:	Date:

This policy is reviewed and updated annually.



COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND FEEDBACK

1. SCOPE

Certhia Consulting Limited [hereafter 'CCL'] is committed to providing a high-quality service to all our customers. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve our services to customers as well as an opportunity to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Our aim is to ensure complaints are handled sensitively and speedily to enable us to:

- Demonstrate our commitment to clients, learners and other stakeholders.
- Demonstrate our commitment to providing the best possible service.
- Help to find out about things that have gone wrong, so we can fix them.
- Help to prevent things going wrong again in future.

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service delivered by us whether justified or not.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with Lynda Watson.

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES

Our policy principles are to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use.
- Publicise our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us.
- Make sure everyone at CCL knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- Make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- Ensure complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- Gather information which helps us to improve what we do.
- Ensure that all complaint information will be handled confidentially.

4. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

CCL will not normally investigate complaints which are received more than six months after the incident or occurrence took place.

Complaints can arrive through many different channels and may be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

All complaints are required to be logged by CCL whether informal or formal. Reasonable complaints will be dealt with as below, if more time is needed the complainant will be advised.

If a complaint cannot be resolved immediately and requires to be formally addressed by CCL the complaint process applies.

- Step 1: the complaint information will be passed to Lynda WATSON who is responsible for managing complaints within 5 working days of receiving the complaint.
- Step 2: the information will be added to the complaints/opportunities to improve log.
- Step 3: a letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent within 5 days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this policy, a contact name and date of expected reply.



- Step 4: the complaint will then be investigated.
- Step 5: we will write within 10 working days of receiving a complaint, confirming our final position.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at this stage, they can request that the complaint is reviewed by a different person at CCL and the following process applies:

- Step 6: a letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent within 5 working days of receiving it.
- Step 7: the complaint will then be investigated.
- Step 8: write within 10 working days of receiving the complaint confirming our final position.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

- Step 9: the decision taken at this stage is final, unless it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

The complainant also has the right to raise any complaints to the appropriate Awarding Organisation or Accrediting body.

Complaints procedure and contact details for a regulator or a regulated Awarding Organisation can be obtained from the following regulators' website:

- International Society of Arboriculture [ISA] Email : isa@isa-arbor.com Tel:+1.217.355.9411
- Lantra Awards Tel:02476 6996 Technical Liaison Sector Schemes and Malpractice
- Ofqual <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>

5. COMPLIMENTS AND FEEDBACK

We define a compliment as an expression of praise concerning a high level of service delivery and/or customer care received.

Acknowledgements will be sent within 5 working days of receipt in respect of all feedback and compliments.

Compliments and feedback which warrant a response will be replied to within 10 working days.

Compliments and feedback may be communicated internally and via social media networks if applicable to external stakeholders and partners and with the customer approval.

6. MONITORING and REPORTING

CCL records complaints and reviews these regularly to identify any trends which may have an impact upon other learners. Where a complaint is upheld, the impact on other learners is considered and action is taken to ensure learners are not disadvantaged.

Where it has been established that a complaint is valid we will take appropriate action that will be proportionate to the gravity and scope of the occurrence. This will be documented at management meeting and added to the risk register.

This policy is reviewed regularly and annually.



APPEALS POLICY

1. SCOPE

This policy outlines how CCL deals with appeals. An appeal is defined as an application for a decision taken by CCL in relation to a learner to be overturned.

CCL are committed to providing a fair and transparent appeals service.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

The policy applies to learners and ourselves. CCL Director, Lynda WATSON, has the overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES

Appeals from learners and/or sub-contractors may be made in relation to a decision where CCL did not apply procedures consistently or those procedures were not followed properly and fairly, examples may include:

- A decision to decline a request to make reasonable adjustments or give special considerations.
- The outcome of assessment, including external verification and certification.
- Any action taken by ourselves following investigations into incidents of malpractice or maladministration.

4. APPEALS PROCESS

When submitting an appeal, the following supporting information is required, where applicable:

- Learner(s) name and contact details;
- Training/qualification/assessment or event to which the appeal refers;
- Date of event to which the appeal refers;
- Date(s) learner or service user received notification of CCL decision;
- Title and certificate number of the training or qualification affected;
- Full details as to the nature of the appeal.

Appeals should be made as early as possible and must be made in writing within 4 weeks of the date of the event that the appeal refers to. As much detail as possible should be submitted, along with any supporting evidence available. There are no fees payable for an appeal.

An initial response to appeals will normally be made within 5 working days, and a Director of CCL will appoint a representative of CCL to conduct the investigation. The representative will not have had any involvement in the training and assessment process relating to the learner, or service user, and will be qualified to make a final decision.

A written response will be given to all reasonable written appeals (letter or email) within a maximum of 10* working days from the date of receipt of the appeal to either:

- Amend CCL's original decision considering the new rationale/evidence being put forward and which has now been reviewed; or
- Confirm that CCL stands by the original decision and in doing so the rationale for this decision.



- Where the appellant is not content with the decision made they may appeal to the relevant regulatory body (ISA or Lantra Awards).

*If this time needs to be extended the applicant will be advised stating a predicted reply date.

Complaints procedure and contact details for a regulator or a regulated Awarding Organisation can be obtained from the following regulators' website:

- International Society of Arboriculture [ISA] Email : isa@isa-arbor.com Tel:+1.217.355.9411
- Lantra Awards Tel: 02476 6996 Technical Liaison Sector Schemes and Malpractice

Where a referral is made to the regulators, CCL will take appropriate, preventative and/or corrective action to prevent re-occurrence as appropriate, such as:

- Identifying any other learners who have been affected to correct and mitigate, as far as possible, the effect of the failure: e.g. amend the results for the learner(s) affected following an appropriate investigation.
- Reviewing CCL's associated processes and policies to ensure that the 'failure' does not occur again; or mitigate the situation as far as possible if the failure that occurred cannot be corrected.
- Co-operating fully with any follow-up investigations required by the regulators and, if appropriate, agree any remedial action with them.

Where the appeal relates to the outcome of an assessment, CCL will liaise with the Awarding Body to ensure as far as practicable that an independent review is undertaken of any assessment evidence concerned.

Where an appeal against assessment brings the outcome of other results into serious question this would be considered a potential 'adverse effect' as other learners may be affected.

In such cases, CCL will ensure that:

- Any other learner who has been affected is identified.
- Effects are corrected or mitigated as far as possible. This may involve adjusting the outcome of assessments (pass/fail) and re-issuing results, or revoking certificates.
- Appropriate action is taken to avoid a re-occurrence. This may involve for example taking action against sub-contractors, assessors, instructors or internal quality assurers and external quality assurers.

CCL will ensure that any actions are monitored through its internal reporting process, trends are identified, and action put in place to reduce the opportunity for reoccurrence.

5. REPORTING

CCL record appeals via a risk register to identify and monitor any recurrent issues or trends.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually.

