

Ofqual
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Awarding body monitoring report

University of the Arts, London Awarding Body

June 2008

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Introduction

Regulating external qualifications

Responsibility for regulating external qualifications lies jointly with three regulators:

- the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)
- the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS), the regulator for Wales
- the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), the regulator for Northern Ireland.

Following the accreditation of a qualification, the regulators systematically monitor awarding organisations against the requirements set out in the statutory regulations. The aim of this activity is to promote continuing improvement and public confidence in the quality of external qualifications.

Where an awarding organisation is found not to comply with relevant criteria, the regulators set conditions of accreditation. Even if an awarding organisation is compliant, the monitoring team may make observations on ways that the awarding organisation could change its systems and procedures to improve clarity or reduce bureaucracy.

Accreditation conditions and observations arising from this monitoring activity are specified at the end of each section of this report. Awarding organisations are required to produce an action plan to show how they will deal with accreditation conditions imposed as a result of a monitoring activity. The regulators will agree the action plan and monitor its implementation.

The regulators will use the outcomes of monitoring and any subsequent action taken by awarding organisations to inform decisions on the re-accreditation of qualifications, or if necessary, the withdrawal of accreditation.

Banked documents

As part of its awarding organisation recognition processes, the regulators require awarding organisations to submit certain documents to Ofqual for the purposes of 'banking' them centrally. Information from banked documents will be used to inform monitoring activities and may also affect the awarding organisation's risk rating.

A suite of documents has been identified as suitable for banking and are those that are considered to be the most crucial in supporting an awarding organisation's ability to operate effectively. To maintain the currency of the banked documents, awarding organisations are responsible for updating them as and when changes occur. They

are also reminded to review them at least annually as part of the annual self-assessment return.

About this report

This is the first opportunity that the regulatory monitoring team has had to engage and test the live systems and processes in operation at the awarding organisation. The systems and processes were documented, but not tested during the application for recognition.

However, it is only through testing the day-to-day operation that we achieve an understanding of how each organisation operates in practice. Therefore, this report should be read with the understanding that a number of systems are likely to need development to ensure they meet the statutory requirements.

The following report on the University of the Arts, London Awarding Body (UALAB) was completed by Ofqual on behalf of the regulators in June 2008. It draws together the regulator's findings on areas of:

- corporate governance
- resources and expertise
- quality assurance and control of independent assessment
- determination and reporting of results
- registration and certification
- malpractice
- equality of opportunity, reasonable adjustments and special consideration
- customer service statements
- enquiries and appeals
- monitoring and self-assessment.

This is the first post-accreditation monitoring activity on UALAB's activities. An application to be recognised as an awarding organisation was made in 2007 for which there is one outstanding accreditation condition relating to certificate design.

The monitoring activities included desk research of information already held by the regulators, the application documents and the mapping of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) criteria. The monitoring team visited UALAB's temporary office to conduct interviews with staff and review documentation. The monitoring team observed an

external moderator training and the external moderation process to check how the awarding organisation's quality assurance systems worked in practice.

About UALAB

UALAB provides access to one qualification, the level 4 Foundation Diploma in art and design in the pilot phase of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). This qualification is assessed internally and is externally moderated. For more information on UALAB and the qualification offered, contact awardingbody@arts.ac.uk.

Corporate governance

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.

Findings

1. UALAB is part of the parent organisation, the University of the Arts London, which traces its origins back to the London Institute. This institute was created by the Inner London Education Authority. Four arts colleges and three other institutions merged into a single organisation that operates on a collegiate basis. After the Education Reform Act of 1988, the London Institute became a higher education corporation with a court of governors and chief executive (rector) accountable to the court. In 2004 the Privy Council approved the change of name to University of the Arts London.
2. The university has several strands of activity, including the awarding organisation. When the application for recognition as an awarding organisation was made, the single named point of accountability for the accredited qualifications had not been appointed. This role is now the responsibility of the acting executive manager.
3. The monitoring team looked at whether or not the awarding organisation is wholly independent of the university. The evidence presented at the time of monitoring suggests that the level of independence is not sufficient to meet the statutory requirements.
4. The monitoring team noted that UALAB has seen a number of changes to premises and personnel during its first year. An executive manager was recruited in late 2007 and has recently left the awarding organisation. The remaining two senior members were not employed during the initial project to gain awarding organisation status. Many of the procedures were in place before their appointments and have not been amended. As a result, members of the university staff involved in the initial set up of the awarding organisation, but not employed by them, participated in some of the monitoring discussions. This enabled the monitoring team to understand the current arrangements for governance.
5. The monitoring team looked at the existing governance, organisation and management structures, which were not clear. The chart showed two lines of reporting from the awarding organisation to the university. The reporting line was to the awarding organisation steering group and also to the director of academic affairs and planning (DAAP) who sits on the steering group. The DAAP reports through the pro-rector to the rector. The steering group reports to the academic board chaired by the rector. A revised chart was presented on the

second day, showing one reporting line to the university through the steering group.

6. The steering group is currently the decision-making committee of the awarding organisation. There are terms of reference, but these do not define clearly the roles and responsibilities of the group. For example, the awarding organisation is being asked to look at the quality of the course rather than checking the consistency and sufficiency of assessment. The members of the steering group are university staff. The regulators are concerned about the lack of externality relating to the delivery of UALAB's accredited qualification. This is a potential for conflict of interest that needs to be suitably managed.
7. There was some discussion during the post-accreditation monitoring activity about the introduction of a quality group that would report to the steering group. Its role would include approving centres and agreeing policies and procedures. The monitoring team considers that this would give UALAB more autonomy and control over its awarding organisation activities.
8. The monitoring team looked at the minutes of committee meetings. These showed that the steering group recommends the approval of centres. As members of the steering group are employed by the university, they are in effect approving their own colleges as centres, which is not acceptable. UALAB should be making these decisions based on the application and visit report.
9. The monitoring team were given full access to awarding organisation documentation, minutes and reports.

Accreditation conditions

1. UALAB must establish its independence and authority from the university demonstrating robust and transparent governance, organisation and management arrangements (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA/04/1293)*, paragraph 5a).

Observations

There are no observations for this section.

Resources and expertise

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA/04/1293)*, paragraphs 8 and 10.

Findings

1. There are two full-time and three part-time staff to support the awarding organisation's activities, including the acting executive manager. UALAB also contracts with an IT consultant to develop the databases and website, which is under construction. The main function of the executive manager is to manage the day-to-day operation of the awarding organisation. Responsibility for the design and implementation of the quality assurance systems lies with the quality and standards officer. The current chief examiner is part-time and leaves in October 2008. He is responsible for managing the team of moderators and lead moderators. The monitoring team has concerns about the turnover of key staff and the fact that the single named point of accountability has not been confirmed in post.
2. The financial and technical resources available to the awarding organisation are satisfactory, but it is clear that existing staff levels need to be reviewed. The monitoring team recognise the efforts of the current staff to cope with the ongoing delivery of the accredited qualification, but there were gaps in the internal systems and procedures that need to be fully documented and implemented.
3. The monitoring team is satisfied that UALAB has suitable procedures to recruit, train and appraise staff for the current activities. It does not currently employ staff to design and develop qualifications as the existing qualification was developed prior to the awarding organisation's recognition. It was not possible to test how UALAB ensures the consistency of standards over time as the assessment cycle had not yet completed a full 12-month cycle.
4. There are 16 moderators. Of these four are designated as lead moderators. The majority of external moderators were recruited through recommendations from approved centres. The monitoring team accepted the rationale that this is a specialist area with relatively few people outside of the sector competent to assess the subject at this level.

Accreditation conditions

2. UALAB must review its current level of staff resources so that it can support the delivery and assessment of the qualification offered (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA/04/1293)*, paragraph 8).

Observations

There are no observations for this section.

Quality assurance and control of internal assessment

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 13, 36, 38–42 and 56–62.

Findings

1. The monitoring team looked at the quality assurance and control systems in place to support the assessment of the level 4 Diploma in art and design, which has seven units.
2. UALAB provides centres with a full specification detailing the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit. Candidates must meet all of the assessment requirements for units 1–7 and are required to confirm the authenticity of the work. Unit 7 is graded and provides the final result. UALAB provides marking criteria to enable assessors to differentiate between the grades of pass, merit or distinction. The monitoring team noted that a fail or referral grade was not included in the grading criteria.
3. Units 1–6 must be completed before unit 7 is started. Project briefs and proposals are used as the basis of assessment. The ideas from units 1–6 can be integrated into the final project and portfolio presentation for unit 7. Following a detailed discussion about the setting of assessment tasks, the monitoring team are satisfied that the project proposal or brief does not need to be agreed in advance with the awarding organisation. All candidates must meet the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit. However, centres need to be given guidance on suitable content for the project proposal or brief for unit 7.
4. The guidance for centres includes information on policies, procedures and referrals. There is limited information on assessment requirements. For example, there is no reference to the number of times work can be referred or the limits of assistance candidates can be given before work is formally assessed.
5. The awarding organisation gives centres guidance on the records and timescales for keeping records, but it was too soon for the monitoring team to sample the effectiveness of these arrangements.
6. The Diploma is internally assessed by tutors, internally moderated and then externally moderated by UALAB. However, the monitoring team is not confident that the existing arrangements will produce consistent results across centres.
7. The awarding organisation does not provide centres with detailed guidance on the assessment or internal moderation requirements post-approval. Centres set

out their own arrangements as part of the centre approval process. This can result in the awarding organisation appearing to accept variations in the grading criteria for units 1–6. For example, the awarding organisation's guidance document states that units 1–6 are assessed on a pass/fail basis. However, an approved submission stated that for units 1–6 an, 'indication is given of Satisfactory, Good or Excellent level of pass'. This inconsistency may confuse learners if they were to look at handbooks for different centres and is in conflict with the information published by the awarding organisation.

8. Units 1–6 are not externally moderated by the awarding organisation. UALAB staff said that these units are internally moderated by the centre, but are not sampled during the external moderation process. Sampling of the assessment and internal moderation records by external moderators would give the awarding organisation more control of the process and contribute to the consistency of assessment across all centres.
9. The guidance for external moderators requires review. Some of the answers relating to disagreements about internal marking decisions do not fully address the questions. External moderators as representatives of the awarding organisation are entitled to disagree with an internal marker's decision if standards are not being met or there are discrepancies in the application of the marking criteria.
10. The arrangements for deploying external moderators are suitable. However the current arrangements for candidate sampling are based on professional trust between the external moderator and centre, allowing centres to choose the sample on behalf of the awarding organisation. There are nine approved centres. Seven of the centres are colleges of the university. Each college's course director decides the sample that the external moderators will examine. This was also confirmed by awarding organisation staff during the monitoring. The monitoring team do not ignore the advantages of a professional relationship between the assessment and external moderation teams, but expects the awarding organisation, not the centres, to be in control of the process of external moderation and to choose the candidate sample.
11. External moderators choose a 10 per cent sample from the 15 per cent sample pre-selected by the centre. UALAB's reasons for why external moderators did not choose the sample prior to the visit included the bulkiness of evidence displayed and short timescale before evidence was returned to the candidates. The evidence is on public display with the sample identified in situ. It should be noted that during the observed visit, the external moderators looked at the work of some candidates not included in the sample, but they did not have all of the background evidence generated by these candidates.

12. The monitoring team are confident that the observed external moderation process was robust. During the activity, the work of 71 candidates was sampled by the team. Eighteen of the sample was looked at by all external moderators to gauge the levels and identify any issues. The external moderators identified an issue with about 18 candidates not meeting two aspects of the marking criteria across the range of marks, and this was to be raised as a general issue in the feedback meeting and included in the written report.
13. Before finalising the report, the team of external moderators checked how many grades they disagreed with across the sample. The external moderators disagreed with grades for 14 per cent of the sample, which is just below the UALAB guidance of 15 per cent tolerance. The monitoring team noted that in the case of borderline grades, the external moderators found it difficult to reconcile the decisions made by centre assessors without the assessment feedback sheets. The main area of concern for the monitoring team was the refusal of the centre to provide the external moderation team with the assessment feedback sheets and internal moderation records, which is a statutory requirement.
14. If a candidate's work does not meet the pass grade criteria for unit 7 it can be re-assessed by the centre at a later date. In this scenario, the external moderator does not re-check the assessment records unless there are major concerns about the centre. For example, if the full cohort was referred. The awarding organisation confirmed that all referrals are included in the external moderation sample, but recognises that this is not explicit in the guidance.
15. The deputy executive manager has drafted procedures to monitor the work of its external moderators, but it was too soon to see completed examples and could not be tested.

Accreditation conditions

3. UALAB must ensure that its systems and procedures produce results that are reliable (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 56).
4. UALAB must ensure that the evidence provided by candidates for units 1–6 is sufficient to determine that the required standards are met (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 57b).
5. UALAB must give centres guidance on the number of times that candidate work can be referred and how to ensure that assessment requirements can be interpreted consistently (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 60).

Observations

1. UALAB should review whether internal assessment is being carried out in the same way across centres and consider providing centres with additional guidance to interpret the grade criteria for unit 7.

Determination and reporting of results

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 63–67.

Findings

1. The monitoring team observed the final day of an external moderation visit to one of the larger centres and identified a number of issues. The lack of documentation at the centre visited to support assessment and internal moderation decisions was unacceptable. Another serious concern was the issuing of results. The centre was holding an exam board meeting after the external moderation visit to confirm the grades awarded. These were to be posted on the noticeboard the following day. The monitoring team have some concerns about these arrangements. Firstly, they are not confident that results are determined on the basis of sufficient evidence given that the awarding organisation does not externally moderate units 1–6. Secondly, although the grades have been confirmed by the external moderation team, the results are being issued by the centre instead of the awarding organisation. It is the awarding organisation's responsibility to issue results for registered candidates, not the centre's. The awarding organisation can allow provisional results, but these must be stated as provisional until they have been confirmed by UALAB.
2. As this is the first year of the qualification, it was not possible to test if standards are being maintained across centres and year-by-year.
3. The grade for the entire qualification is determined on the final mark awarded for unit 7. The awarding organisation provided a table, *Grade criteria for unit seven*, showing how the elements of unit 7 were assessed and graded as pass, merit and distinction. To achieve a pass, all grading criteria have to be met, but there is no explanation of a fail grade. Candidates can be referred or defer their work for unit 7. There is an explanation of referral in the centre guidance, which may be confusing. Referrals can be made for extenuating circumstances or on academic grounds identified by the centre and external moderator.
4. It is unclear if candidates know how the final grade is determined. UALAB stated that the assessment criteria are not aggregated to determine the final grade, but this is not explicit in the guidance to candidates.
5. UALAB provides centres with documentation, but there is no candidate handbook. It is difficult to see how users understand the meaning of the grades awarded. The monitoring team noted that this information was in one of the course handbooks prepared by a centre.

Accreditation conditions

6. UALAB must develop awarding procedures explaining how the qualification will be awarded. The procedures must ensure that results are based on sufficient evidence and it is clear how decisions are made. This decision-making process must be accessible to the external moderation team and centres must not issue final results without confirmation from the awarding organisation (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 63).
7. UALAB must provide information that will enable users to differentiate between the meanings of grades (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 67).

Observations

There are no observations for this section.

Registration and certification

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 11, 12, 21 and 22.

Findings

1. There are centre approval procedures in place. Potential centres complete an application form and provide a course handbook. These are reviewed by quality reviewers and put to the steering group for approval. The monitoring team looked at some centre files, which contained the centre application form, reviewer's report and course handbook. They also noted that the course handbooks varied considerably from very detailed documents to course pamphlets with no reference to the awarding organisation. Some centres had provided assessment recording documentation. The monitoring team considered that one of the assessment booklets was a useful tool for recording the assessment decisions.
2. UALAB has attempted to identify a single named point of accountability for the quality assurance and management of its qualification through the centre approval process. However, it has split responsibility for specific areas such as internal verification and asked for the name of each person responsible. As a result, one person could be named as the single named point of accountability and another named for quality assurance or management. The application form should be simplified so that one person is identified as the single named point of accountability.
3. The division of centres into sub-centres and satellites is complex, but only applies to the university. UALAB has approved the university as a centre with single named colleges identified as sub-centres. The monitoring team acknowledges the rationale for this approach, but UALAB must require the university in its role as a centre to identify who has overall responsibility for the quality assurance of the accredited qualification.
4. UALAB could not provide any evidence that centres had agreed to provide access for the awarding organisation and the regulators to premises, people and records, and to cooperate with monitoring activities.
5. The design of the certificate shown to the monitoring team does not meet the statutory requirements. It did not include the signature of the single named point of accountability at the awarding organisation.
6. Candidate results are sent electronically to the awarding organisation and checked for accuracy before certificates can be issued. These procedures could not be tested as UALAB had not issued any certificates prior to the monitoring activity.

7. Candidates can request replacement certificates, by completing a *Replacement certificate request* form, but the guidance does not explain what to do if a certificate is lost or destroyed.
8. It was not possible to fully test the certification systems as none of the candidates had been certificated.

Accreditation conditions

8. UALAB must require centres to provide the awarding organisation and regulators with access to premises, people and records. Centres must agree to cooperate with the awarding organisation's monitoring activities (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 11).
9. UALAB must ensure that the design of certificates meet the regulatory requirements. Specimen certificates must be provided for banking, showing a full certificate, a unit certificate and a replacement certificate (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 22).
10. UALAB must inform its clients that the regulatory logos on the certificate indicate that the qualification is accredited only for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 21b).

Observations

2. UALAB should simplify its application form for centre approval to ensure that it obtains a single named point of accountability for the quality assurance and management of the qualifications from each approved centre.

Malpractice

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 28–31.

Findings

1. A malpractice statement is included as part of the complaints and appeals procedures. It includes definitions of malpractice and maladministration, but both definitions are confusing and not a statutory requirement.
2. The awarding organisation is keen to report all examples of malpractice to the regulators, but awarding organisations are only required to report cases if certificates have been issued and are deemed invalid as a result of an awarding organisation investigation.
3. UALAB appears to have devolved the investigation of malpractice to its centres and specifies that certification would be suspended in all cases. Awarding organisations are required to carry out any investigation of suspected malpractice and impose suitable sanctions where applicable.

Accreditation conditions

11. UALAB must state in its arrangements that it will conduct a full investigation of instances of alleged or suspected malpractice and what action it will take. This action must be relevant to the severity of the malpractice (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 30).

Observations

3. UALAB should consider whether it wants to retain definitions of malpractice and maladministration within its documented procedure. If so, it may wish to consult with Ofqual's compliance section on the definitions.

Equality of opportunity, reasonable adjustments and special consideration

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 9 and 14–20.

Findings

1. The monitoring team reviewed the statement about equality of opportunity. Equal opportunities are not clearly defined and the target audience appears to be centre staff. Candidates are not mentioned. The statement does not include any reference to access to fair assessment or guaranteeing fair assessment for all candidates. In addition, it does not state that the needs of all candidates must be considered when developing qualifications. UALAB will need to review the existing policy so that it meets the statutory requirements.
2. Awarding organisations must publish its arrangements for making reasonable adjustments. The existing policy does not meet the statutory requirements. The policy states that centres can apply to UALAB on behalf of candidates, but the timescale for applying is not stated.
3. UALAB provides a table showing which adjustments have to be authorised by the awarding organisation and those that can be made by the centre. The monitoring team noted that the types of reasonable adjustments described are more applicable to written examinations than internal assessment. In addition, the policy talks about exam conditions when assessment is internal. The guidance is confusing and needs to be reviewed so that it meets the needs of candidates and is suitable for the assessment methodology of the qualification.
4. UALAB has published its procedures for special consideration, but these do not meet the statutory requirements. The conditions of eligibility do not state the timescale for applying for special consideration. There are also confusing statements within the policy and it appears to have been written as if examinations are the key assessment method. As this qualification is based on internal assessment, it is extremely unlikely that special consideration will apply except in the case of unit 7.
5. The awarding organisation states that it may consider an aegrotat award if a candidate is unable to complete the award because of illness. As the full award is based on the outcome of unit 7, candidates could resubmit the work if the original deadline was missed as part of special consideration. It would be unfair on other candidates if an aegrotat award was made on the strength of completing units 1–6. However, UALAB must consider what it would do if a candidate lost or had their work stolen for unit 7 prior to external moderation. The monitoring team would not be adverse to an aegrotat being awarded under

these circumstances if there were internal assessment feedback sheets and evidence of internal verification confirming grades for unit 7 and supported by documentation.

6. UALAB staff confirmed that there are no procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of any reasonable adjustments or special consideration.

Accreditation conditions

12. UALAB must review its existing policy for equality of opportunity so that it meets the needs of candidates. It must explain for example how candidates are guaranteed fair assessment, how it will ensure that any reasonable adjustments agreed do not invalidate the assessment requirements or give candidates an unfair advantage (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 9, 14 and 15).
13. UALAB must review its existing policy for reasonable adjustments so that it is fit for purpose. It must ensure that the policy is accessible to candidates and centres (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 17).
14. UALAB must review its existing policy for special consideration to include timescales and the feasibility of aegrotat awards (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 18 and 19).
15. UALAB must develop procedures to monitor and evaluate its use of reasonable adjustments and special consideration (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 20).

Observations

4. UALAB should consider whether or not an aegrotat award should be made in the case of illness or bereavement when the candidate can repeat the assessment. In addition, UALAB should consider how it will apply special consideration if a candidate's work for unit 7 is lost or stolen prior to external moderation.

Customer service statements

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 32 and 33b.

Findings

1. There is a customer service statement, but this is aimed at centres and not candidates. Information on the quality of service offered in relation to the qualification is limited. For example, there are no timescales for issuing certificates or signposting to where information on appeals can be found. Some of this information is included in the guidance for centres. Awarding organisations are required to publish a customer service statement that is accessible to all customers, including candidates.
2. UALAB does not have procedures for monitoring its performance against customer service targets. Awarding organisation staff explained that there will be a tracking system on the database to monitor its customer service target for issuing certificates. The system will have an automatic flag if a certificate is not issued within 20 days. However, the effectiveness of this system could not be tested as UALAB had not issued any certificates prior to the monitoring activity.

Accreditation conditions

16. UALAB must publish a customer service statement that is accessible to candidates and include information on the quality of service offered in relation to its qualification (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 32).
17. UALAB must develop procedures to monitor its performance against its published customer service targets (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 33b).

Observations

There are no observations for this section.

Enquiries and appeals

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 23–27.

Findings

1. Awarding organisations are required to publish procedures about its enquiries and appeals arrangements. The monitoring team could find no evidence of an enquiry service for candidates or centres.
2. It was not possible to test the effectiveness of the appeals arrangements as the qualification has not completed a full cycle.
3. The appeals procedure does not meet the statutory regulations. The monitoring team noted that UALAB does not accept appeals against assessment decisions. This is in direct conflict with the statutory requirements as candidates must have the right to appeal to the awarding organisation against an assessment decision if they have exhausted the centre's appeals process.
4. Statements about the appeals arrangements are not clear and the whole process is confusing. The monitoring team would expect to see the information on exhausting the centre's appeals process prior to allowing a candidate to appeal to the awarding organisation.
5. The stages of the process need to be reviewed so that there is a logical sequence. The existing policy does not include the timescale for the second stage of appeal or explain how an unresolved appeal can be put to independent review. The procedure needs to be rewritten, taking into account the statutory regulations, in particular paragraph 25.
6. If the outcome of an appeal reveals inaccuracies in assessment, awarding organisations must look at the results of candidates in that cohort so that the integrity of the qualification is not compromised. There was reference to this in the awarding organisation documentation, but it needs to be included in the appeals arrangements.
7. UALAB confirmed that there are no procedures in place to monitor, evaluate and report on the operation of its enquiries and appeals arrangements.

Accreditation conditions

18. UALAB must publish its procedures for enquiries and appeals (The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 23).

19. UALAB must amend its appeals arrangements so that it is clear to candidates and centres, and meets the regulatory criteria. The arrangements must enable candidates to appeal against assessment decisions and explain how an unresolved appeal can be put to independent review (The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 25).
20. UALAB must explain what steps it will take if the outcome of an appeal questions the accuracy of other results (The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 26).
21. UALAB must have procedures in place to monitor, evaluate and report annually on the operation of its enquiry and appeals arrangements (The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 27).

Observations

There are no observations for this section.

Monitoring and self-assessment

This is subject to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraphs 33(a), 34, 35 and 37.

Findings

1. The monitoring team appreciate that UALAB is in the early stages of development as an awarding organisation and that many systems and procedures are not fully developed. There is an urgent need for UALAB to look at the demands of the statutory requirements and evaluate its existing position against the statutory regulations. This will enable the awarding organisation to measure whether or not it can meet these demands in full.
2. The *medium term strategy, 2008–11* and *Operational plan* states that UALAB will carry out a programme of customer service satisfaction surveys, but this is aimed at moderators and centres, not candidates.

Accreditation conditions

22. UALAB must have procedures in place to monitor its compliance with the regulatory criteria (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 33a).
23. UALAB must provide opportunities for candidates to contribute its self-monitoring arrangements (*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QCA/04/1293), paragraph 34).

Observations

5. UALAB will need to consider how it will meet the annual self-assessment requirements.

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