

Qualifications Withdrawal Policy



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Introduction

CIOL Qualifications (CIOLQ) aims to secure and maintain standards for those qualifications that we certificate. As part of our commitment to candidates, we aim to provide guidance and support to enable them to achieve their learning and development goals.

This document outlines the procedure to be followed by CIOLQ in the event of a unit or qualification being withdrawn. We will ensure that any unit or qualification withdrawal will be managed with due consideration given to the interests of its candidates and course providers. We will do this by ensuring there is sufficient time for dealing with registrations and certifications so that we protect the interests of our candidates' achievement in line with published Operational End Dates (OEDs) and Certification End Dates (CEDs).

Scope

This policy applies to all regulated qualifications offered by CIOLQ.

This policy covers the following:

- All qualifications and units offered by CIOLQ
- All staff, contractors, members, qualification regulators, course providers staff and candidates who use CIOLQ

We will comply with any regulatory requirements as stipulated by the regulators with regard to the withdrawal of a unit or qualification.

Rationale for withdrawal of a unit or qualification

We may consider the withdrawal of a unit or qualification for the following reasons:

- Lack of demand for the unit or qualification
- The qualification no longer meets regulatory requirements
- The qualification subject matter is no longer relevant
- As part of a qualification specification update
- Lack of candidate registrations
- Lack of sector demand for the unit or qualification
- A change in the skills required by the sector
- Other factors leading to a unit or qualification not being fit for purpose
- Ofqual has withdrawn its recognition of CIOLQ

CIOL Qualifications obligations

We will take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of candidates in relation to a unit or qualification that CIOLQ withdraw.

We will produce, maintain and comply with a written withdrawal plan, outlining how the interests of candidates will be protected, and how the withdrawal will be managed internally and externally. This plan must comply with any requirements Ofqual has communicated to CIOLQ in writing.

Notification of withdrawal of a unit or qualification will usually be made at least 12 months before the final registration date agreed for the unit or qualification being withdrawn; however, consideration will also be given to the Total Qualification Time as published in the relevant qualification specification(s).

Clear and accurate information about the reasons for withdrawal and the withdrawal schedule will be provided, and any transition arrangements will be published.

CIOLQ will also give reasonable notice to the relevant regulators regarding its intention to withdraw a unit or qualification and will do this before communicating with candidates and course providers.

Candidates and course providers will be required to comply with our procedures for the withdrawal of any unit or qualification.

Withdrawal procedures

Any decision to withdraw a unit or qualification will be made by the Responsible Officer in negotiation with the senior management team. This decision will be made after consultation with key stakeholders, members, the Trust Board and any other relevant advisory groups.

Any decision to withdraw a unit or qualification will be evidenced by a withdrawal plan to be signed off by the Responsible Officer.

Withdrawal process

The withdrawal plan will comply with any regulatory requirements and will:

- Specify how the interests of candidates (in relation to the unit or qualification) will be protected
- Specify any consequences of the unit or qualification being withdrawn, and what steps will be taken to mitigate any possible adverse consequences of the unit or qualification withdrawal
- Specify how the withdrawal will be communicated (including timescales) to the regulators, course providers and candidates
- Provide clear and accurate information to be communicated about the withdrawal to candidates and course providers, with detailed timelines and transition arrangements to other appropriate and relevant qualifications if applicable
- Provide details of all deadlines including the last date for accepting registrations, the last assessment date(s), re-sit opportunities and the last date for certification
- Where relevant, provide transition arrangements, for old units or qualifications onto a new qualification
- Confirm the date on which the unit or qualification will cease to be recognised for exemptions or transition under the latest qualification
- Comply with any requirements that the regulators have communicated

Communication

CIOLQ will construct a communications plan that outlines how the withdrawal will be managed and communicated to staff, contractors, members, qualification regulators, course provider staff and candidates.

The communication plan will include:

- The rationale for the withdrawal of the unit or qualification
- The last date for registrations
- The last date for certification
- Any other information about how the withdrawal will be managed and communicated
- Contact details for further guidance

Course providers withdrawing from CIOL Qualifications

When a course provider withdraws from providing courses specifically designed for our qualifications, whether through choice or instruction, it must:

- Ensure current and future candidates are informed in a timely fashion
- Ensure candidates already entered for a unit or qualification have been provided with support to consider options for them to complete their learning
- Not make any misrepresentations in any marketing material regarding a unit or qualification that has been withdrawn
- Notify CIOLQ of any candidates who may be affected by the withdrawal
- Comply with any written instructions by CIOLQ about the withdrawal of its unit or qualification
- Endeavour to support candidates to find alternative course providers to complete the qualification

Policy updating and reviewing

All policies relating to CIOLQ will be updated on an 18-month cycle or sooner as required.

Policy version and owner

Policy review date	May 2026
Policy owner	Responsible Officer

Regulatory references

Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition
Condition D7: Management of the withdrawal of qualifications
Qualifications Wales
Condition D7: Management of the withdrawal of qualifications