CENTRE HANDBOOK

SIAS

AWARDING
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Contents

This Handbook can be used by all SIAS (Science Industry Assessment Services) approved centres to provide guidance for the delivery of qualifications. It is a requirement for Centres to familiarise themselves with the contents of the Centre Handbook.

AWARDING
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1. Working with SIAS

At SIAS, we pride ourselves on being an awarding organization, dedicated to offering a range of high-quality science, engineering and technical qualifications tailored to meet the needs of both learners and industry stakeholders.

1.1. Overview of our product offering

SIAS Awarding	SIAS Accredited	
Regulated Qualifications	SIAS Endorsed	SIAS Accredited
• Regulated by OFQUAL (England) and/or CCEA (Norther Ireland) • Clearly defined learning outcomes and assessment criteria, mapped to appropriate assessment methodology. • Externally quality assured by SIAS before certification is released. Direct Claim Status (DCS) may be applied after initial sampling and if recommended by External Quality Assurer.	• Awarded for learning activities which require no form of assessment, for example, inductions, participation in workshops, webinars, etc. • Externally quality checked annually.	• Formal assessment of learners' knowledge, skills, and behaviours. • Clearly defined learning outcomes and assessment criteria, mapped to appropriate assessment methodology. • Reviewed by SIAS' Product Team and Subject Matter Experts (centre allocated) EQA (External Quality Assurance). • Externally quality assured by SIAS before certification is released. Direct Claim Status (DCS) may be applied after initial sampling and if recommended by External Quality Assurer.

Requests for SIAS to endorse or accredit training can be made through the Accredited/Endorsed Development Enquiry Form on Pinacle.

More detailed Information on our products and services can be found on our website.

1.2. Pinacle

Pinacle is SIAS's user-friendly, secure online awarding system, which offers comprehensive support to centres through a range of integrated modules designed to streamline processes and enhance efficiency. Training on how to use Pinacle is provided during the onboarding process to ensure you are fully supported on how to use the system.

Once a Centre has submitted their Centre Approval fee and successfully passed our initial checks, limited access will be granted to the system which enables the Centre Approval application form to be completed and submitted to SIAS. On approval of the Centre full access will be provided to the system.

Following on from approval the Pinacle system can be used for the following:

- Supporting with the end-to-end learner journey from registration to certification.
- Scheduling exams
- Uploading assessment evidence
- Viewing and responding to the outcomes of Centre Monitoring Visits
- Raising Appeals.
- Submitting Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations.
- Reporting instances of Malpractice/Maladministration
- Updating Centre details.
- Submitting Enquiries
- Responding to Actions
- Requesting to offer additional Qualifications.

The activities listed above can performed through the creation and submission of the following forms:

Forms that a Centre can create and submit to SIAS

Please note that the forms from Booking onwards are only available once you have successfully completed the SIAS Centre Approval process.

Form Name	Purpose of Form
Action Response Form	This form can be used to respond to any actions that SIAS may have set. Further guidance on completion of this form is available in Appendix D of the Centre Approval Guidance document.
Centre Approval Application Form	This form is used by prospective Centres to apply for Centre Approval.
Change Organisation Details Form	This form can be used when a Centre wishes to change its contact details such as name, address or contact numbers.
Complaint Form	This form can be used to submit a complaint to SIAS.
Enquiry Form	This form can be used to submit an enquiry to SIAS.
Booking Form	This form is used to register learners, book exams, claim achievements, and view certification.
Accredited/Endorsed Development/Enquiry Form	This form can be used to submit an enquiry related to having a SIAS Accredited/Endorsed product developed.
Additional Qualification Application Form	This form can be used to apply to offer SIAS qualifications in addition to those that were applied for during the Centre Approval process.
Appeal Form	This form can be used to submit an Appeal to SIAS following the guidelines set out in the Appeals Policy. It can be used either to submit a learner appeal or an appeal on behalf of the Centre against a decision that SIAS has made.
Malpractice and/or Maladministration Form	This form can be used to submit details of a possible/actual case of malpractice/maladministration.
Moderation Request Form	This form can be used to request SIAS to conduct External Moderation of learner work to have learner achievement awarded.
Qualification Feedback Form	This form can be used to submit feedback on SIAS qualifications.
Reasonable Adjustments/Special Consideration Form	This form can be used to apply for any Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations that must be approved by SIAS. For details of what can be approved by SIAS, or the Centre please refer to the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.

Forms that SIAS can create and submit to a Centre

Form Name	Purpose of Form
Centre Engagement Report	This form is used during Centre Engagements to report findings, outcomes, actions, and recommendations.
Information Request Form	This form can be used by SIAS to request information from a Centre.
Investigation Report	This form can be used by SIAS to record any allegations of malpractice or maladministration. It can be submitted to the Centre for a response.

For additional guidance on how to access and use the Pinacle system, please refer to section 14.4 of this Centre Handbook, which details the resources available to assist you in navigating and utilizing the system effectively.

2. Becoming a Centre

2.1. Process for Becoming a Centre

An overview of the process for becoming approved as a SIAS Centre can be seen below. Please refer to the Centre Approval Guidance document for more detailed information on the approval process.

INITIAL INQUIRY

As a prospective SIAS partner and Approved Centre, you can complete our Expression of Interest Form available on the SIAS website or contact us directly. You will be asked to provide some information on your organization type, and the SIAS products you would like to offer and deliver, this will then help us to support you with your application.

APPROVAL FEE AND INITIAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECKS

Upon receipt of a completed and signed Commercial Agreement and payment of the Centre Application and Approval Fee, SIAS will conduct an initial quality assurance review before inviting you to a meeting where the operations team will support and guide you through the next steps and explain in more detail any further requirements.

APPLICATION FORM

After the completion of the initial quality assurance review SIAS will provide log-in capability to Pinacle, our AO (Awarding Organisation) System, which enables you to then access and complete the Centre Approval Application Form. Full support will be provided by the SIAS operations team as we guide you through the process. You will also be issued with a Centre Agreement through Pinacle. This document sets out the roles and responsibilities of both parties and will be signed by you as part of the application process.

DESKTOP REVIEW

An initial desktop review will be carried out by SIAS which includes a review of the form and supporting documentation.

CENTRE APPROVAL VISIT

A SIAS EQA will then conduct a site visit to review and discuss resources and facilities, make any required recommendations, provide relevant feedback, and outline any actions required.

APPLICATION OUTCOME

Following the Centre Approval process's completion and subject to a successful application result, the Centre Agreement will be signed by SIAS. and you will be issued with a Centre Approval Certificate. If the initial Centre Approval is not granted, you will receive full and comprehensive advice and guidance to support a successful re-application.

ONBOARDING

An on-boarding and full induction session will take place with a member of the SIAS Operations team, inclusive of access to a range of guidance and support information, the setting up of agreed ways of working, and putting in place key contact and communication points. – this session will provide support and guidance on the use of the SIAS Pinacle AO System, as well as an opportunity to answer any questions you may have.

REGISTERING LEARNERS

At this point full access will be granted to SIAS Pinacle, and you can register learners on specified SIAS qualifications and products.

CONTINUOUS SUPPORT

As an officially approved SIAS Centre, you will be designated a specific Centre Relationship Manager, as well as a Partnership & Growth Manager, who, in addition to the wider SIAS team, will provide a range of on-going best in market support and customer experience to you as a valued SIAS Approved Centre partner.

2.2. Requirements for Becoming a Centre

The table below details the requirements to become a SIAS Centre. Justification and evidence should be provided against these areas while completing the Centre Approval Application form.

This will then be reviewed by during the desktop review and EQA visit elements of the Centre Approval process

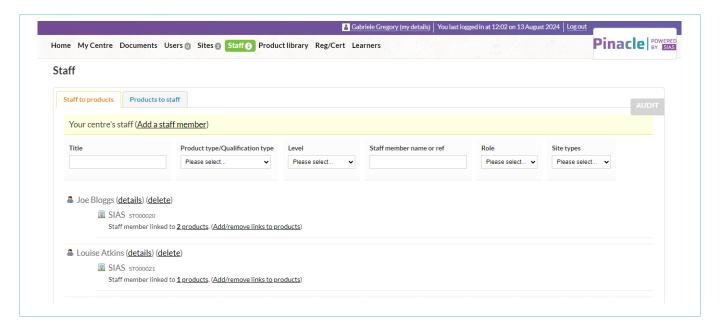| Resources	
Staff: **Staff members should be allocated to the following roles:**	• Head of Centre - Senior member of staff with overall centre responsibility • Staff member with overall responsibility for ensuring quality assurance of qualification delivery. • Staff which are competent and qualified to deliver each aspect of the qualification(s) • Finance Contact - Staff member with finance responsibility e.g. timely payment of invoices • Exams Officer - Member(s) of staff to complete Learner Registrations and Certificate claims (CVs, qualification certificates and assessor/IQA qualifications will need to be uploaded for staff involved in the delivery/assessment of SIAS qualifications. This includes IQAs, Assessors, Tutors/Trainers, and Invigilators). **Equipment** • Sufficient physical resources (including buildings, equipment, and materials) to support delivery of qualifications. • Sufficient IT resources to support delivery of qualifications and record keeping.
Record-Keeping	• Records should be held for each learner. • Records should be retained for 3 years after achievement. • Centres should have a system to track learner progress. • Records may need to be made available to SIAS as part of our External Quality Assurance processes • All data relating to learners, assessment materials and assessment outcomes should be stored securely.

Policies	• Access to Fair Assessment Policy/Statement • Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy/Procedure • Appeals Policy • Complaints Policy • Data Protection Policy • Equal Opportunities Policy • Examination and Invigilation Policy and Procedure (if appropriate to the products) • Health and Safety Policy • Internal Quality Assurance/Verification Policy • Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
Additional Supporting Evidence	• Public Liability/Employer's Liability Insurance

2.3. Roles and Responsibilities

Centre Role	Responsibilities
Head of Centre	• The Head of Centre holds overall responsibility for managing the centre and ensuring compliance with SIAS and regulatory requirements. They will also sign off on the Centre Agreement.
Finance Contact	The Finance Contact is responsible for ensuring timely payment of invoices.
Quality Assurance Contact	This person is responsible for ensuring that effective internal quality assurance processes are implemented and for liaising with the External Quality Assurer (EQA) during any centre monitoring activity.
Assessor	Assessors are responsible for delivering assessments and making assessment decisions that are fair, reliable, and valid in line with SIAS requirements.
Tutor	Tutors will deliver knowledge and training to learners. They must ensure they are familiar with the contents of assessments.
Invigilator	Invigilators are responsible for ensuring that examinations are conducted in a secure way which is consistent with SIAS's Invigilation Policy and Guidance.
Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)	The IQA's role is to ensure that assessments have been conducted in a manner that is fair, consistent, and safe. This will involve sampling learner work and assessment decisions, observing assessor/trainer performance, facilitating standardisation sessions, and providing support to trainers and assessors. It is a requirement for an IQA to hold an IQA qualification.

Please note in some centres it may be the case that multiple roles are carried out by the same person. It must be assured that this does not compromise on the integrity, quality, or fairness of the assessment process.

Staff who are involved in the delivery, assessment, and quality assurance of SIAS products and qualifications should be added to Pinacle where they can be linked to roles (assessor, tutor/trainer, invigilator, IQA) and to products. The relevant qualifications and documentation should be uploaded for each staff member added to the system.

 SIAS will subsequently review and approve each staff member added. It will not be possible to register learners if there are no approved staff members assigned to the qualification.

Users will also need to be added on Pinacle who are allocated against the following roles:

• Centre Contact

• Exams Officer

• Finance Contact

• Head of Centre

• Main Point of Contact for SIAS

Please refer to the Appendices of the Centre Approval Guidance document for further information on adding staff and users to Pinacle.

2.4. Additional Sites

Centres must register their sites on Pinacle which are subsequently approved by SIAS. Sites can be linked to the SIAS products you are offering.

There are three distinct categories of sites that a Centre can have:

- **Main Site** – this is the main location of the SIAS Centre. In many cases the Centre may only have one site.
- **Satellite Site:** An additional or satellite site is defined by SIAS as any additional location, apart from the main site, where SIAS qualifications, assessments, or training activities are conducted. Approval must be obtained before any qualifications, assessments, or training activities can begin at the satellite site. Additional sites will be subject to Centre monitoring activities.

For further information please refer to the Satellite site policy.

- **Assessment Site** – any location where assessment activities occur, which could be either a main or satellite site.

2.5. Additional Qualification Approval

Once approved, Centres can apply to offer additional qualifications through Pinacle (Additional Qualification Application Form). Approval is subject to the Centre meeting any Qualification specific approval criteria including appropriate facilities, resources, and personnel who are able to deliver the new qualification(s) effectively.
An EQA will be assigned to review the application, ensuring the form is fully completed and all necessary information is included. There may be a requirement for a Centre visit. If this is the case, please refer to the SIAS Fees List for additional information on costs.

3. Registering Leaners

All learners completing a SIAS qualification must be registered on Pinacle (Registration Form). Please refer to the Reg/Cert Module guidance document for further information on how to register learners onto Pinacle.

It is a requirement of Centres to do the following when registering Learners:

- Verify learner's identity (for quality assurance purposes you should keep a record of the evidence used to formally identify a learner)
- Ensure the accuracy of data being entered (e.g. legal name must be used, the correct qualification has been selected)
- Ensure learners are registered within an appropriate timeframe on commencing their programme.

As an awarding organisation we have a responsibility under the Data Protection Act to ensure that learners are informed of how their information is processed and shared. Please ensure you make learners aware that their information will be passed to SIAS during registration.

For registration fees please refer to the SIAS Fees List.

4. Assessment

For more detailed information on the requirements for assessing and delivering SIAS qualifications please refer to the specific Qualification Specification and Guidance for the relevant qualification.

4.1. The Role of the Assessor

The role of the assessor is to evaluate the competence and knowledge of learners against the standards and criteria established by SIAS. Assessors design, conduct, and mark assessments, providing constructive feedback to help learners improve. They ensure the assessment process is fair, consistent, and transparent, maintaining detailed records of learners' progress and outcomes. Assessors also collaborate with Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) to ensure the reliability and validity of the assessment process, contributing to the overall quality and integrity of the qualification framework.

4.2. Assessment Planning

When a Centre is approved to offer a qualification consideration should be given to the following:

- Scheduling assessment across the programme to ensure that learners are not over-assessed at any given point.
- Ensuring that sufficient evidence is generated for each Learner which meets all assessment criteria/learning outcomes.

4.3. Assessment Methods

Assessment methods for a given qualification can include, but are not limited to:

- Course work
- Portfolio of evidence (including for example records of professional discussions)
- Written tests/essays in a controlled environment
- Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) examination
- Practical demonstration/assignments
- Observations
- Interview
- Project with presentation and questioning

Please refer to the Qualification Specification for information about the assessment methods that will be used.

4.4. Portfolios

Some Qualifications may have a requirement for the Learner to collate a Portfolio of Evidence to demonstrate their competence. Portfolios should include the following information:

- Learner Name, Assessor Name and IQA Name
- A matrix sheet to demonstrate where the assessment criteria has been met
- A statement signed by the learner to confirm that the portfolio contains their own work.
- All evidence of Centre feedback to the Learner

4.5. Examinations

SIAS administers examinations through the on-line XAMS platform. For a particular qualification this may include multiple-choice test or short and long answer exams. Exams are scheduled through Pinacle. Learners will be prompted, via email, to complete a systems check before being issued with the link to the exam.

Remote invigilation is available through Integrity Advocate which is integrated into the XAMS system. For any costs relating to this please refer to the SIAS Fees List. If invigilation is provided by Centre staff it should be ensured that the invigilator has not provided training or assessment to that learner. If that is not possible extra scrutiny will be provided.

For further information please refer to the Invigilation Policy and Guidance.

4.6. Result Release Timeframes

The release of results, following an assessment, will vary depending on the type of assessment undertaken. SIAS is committed to ensuring that all results are issued within the timeframes outlined below.

Type of Assessment	Timeframe
On-line Multiple-choice Test	3 working days
On-line Written Test	15 working days
Paper Test	14 working days
Release of results for internally assessed elements (from the date of submission of the Moderation Request form)	21 working days

4.7. Recognised Prior Learning

The purpose of RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) is to ensure that learners receive appropriate recognition for prior learning and experience.

To determine whether RPL can be applied to a learner please refer to the RPL Policy in addition to the Product Specification. There may be a limit as to how much of the qualification can be assessed through RPL and not all SIAS qualifications may allow for the application of RPL.

4.8. Retention of Learner Evidence

Centres must retain evidence of leaner assessments for quality assurance purposes. Learner evidence must be retained for a minimum of three years. Any evidence should be stored in accordance with data protection legislation.

4.9. Confidentiality of Assessment Materials

Centres are responsible for ensuring the following:

• Any assessment materials (physical or electronic) are stored securely.

• Assessments and Examinations are administered/invigilated in a way which is in accordance with relevant guidance.

If there has been an alleged or suspected breach to the integrity of assessment materials this should be reported to SIAS as soon as possible.

4.10. Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Reasonable adjustments are modifications to the assessment process or environment to accommodate learners based on their individual needs. Special considerations are allowances for those affected by significant adverse circumstances. Centres must support learners in requesting necessary adjustments or considerations and provide guidance on documentation requirements. Adjustments must be based on individual needs, not provide unfair advantages, and be approved before assessments.

Requests for Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations can be made through the Reasonable Adjustments form on the Pinacle system.

Please refer to the Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy for further information.

5. Internal Quality Assurance

All SIAS Centres must have rigorous quality assurance systems in place to ensure that the integrity of our qualifications and any accredited/endorsed products are maintained. Effective implementation of quality assurance systems should ensure the following:

- All learners are assessed accurately, fairly, and consistently to the right standard.

- Assessment tasks and learner work are sampled appropriately.

- Good practice is promoted through internal standardisation events and quality assurance meetings.

- Decisions are supported by full and clear records and action plans that are followed.

- Internal processes are transparent and regularly evaluated.

5.1. The Role of the IQA

The role of the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) is crucial in maintaining the standards and integrity of the qualification process. The IQA is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the assessment practices within a Centre to ensure consistency, fairness, and compliance with regulatory requirements. This includes observing assessment activities, reviewing assessor decisions, providing feedback and support to assessors, and ensuring that assessment records are accurate and complete. The IQA also plays a key role in continuous improvement by identifying areas for development and implementing strategies to enhance the quality of assessments. Through these activities, the IQA helps to uphold the credibility of the qualifications awarded and ensures that learners receive fair and valid assessments.

5.2. IQA strategy

SIAS Centres must have a clear IQA strategy in place which incorporates the following:

- **Recording of Assessors' and IQAs' Occupational Competence**

  Ensure that the qualifications and experience of assessors and IQAs are documented and up to date. Maintain a register of their occupational competence to verify they meet the necessary standards for the qualifications they assess.

- **Recording and Management of Assessor CPD (Continuing Professional Development)**

  Track and manage ongoing professional development activities for assessors. Ensure they continually update their skills and knowledge to stay current with industry standards and practices.

- **Sampling Strategy for the Qualifications Offered**

  Implement a robust sampling strategy that includes both formative (ongoing) and summative (final) assessments. Regularly sample assessment tasks and learner work to ensure consistency and accuracy in grading and feedback.

- **Standardisation Schedule**

  Develop and adhere to a schedule for standardisation activities. Conduct regular meetings and events to ensure that assessors and IQAs apply consistent assessment criteria and practices.

- **Process for Dealing with Instances of Malpractice/Maladministration**

  Establish a clear process for identifying, reporting, and managing cases of malpractice or maladministration. Ensure swift and effective action is taken to address any issues, maintaining the integrity of the assessment process.

Having these processes in place will help ensure that SIAS Centres maintain high standards of quality assurance, which upholds the integrity of the qualifications being offered.

6. External Quality Assurance

6.1. The Role of the EQA

SIAS appoints External Quality Assurers (EQA) to approve centres, carry out centre monitoring visits, complete sampling activities and to provide advice and guidance to Centres. They play a vital role in ensuring consistency of approach which helps to maintain the integrity of our qualifications.

6.2. Centre Engagements

After the initial Centre Approval visit SIAS will monitor each Centre a minimum of once a year (face to face or remote engagement). The number of engagements required will be based on the Centre's risk rating, the types of the qualifications they offer and their current levels of activity. Centre Engagements which take place in addition to the annual monitoring visit may carry an additional fee (please see SIAS Centre Fees List).

Further engagements may be required because of issues identified during an initial Centre engagement, as result of reports or allegations of malpractice/maladministration, or because of a failure to respond to any actions SIAS have issued. SIAS also reserve the right to carry out short notice engagements if required.

Approximately six weeks before an engagement is due, the EQA will contact the Head of Centre to agree a convenient time for the engagement, to explain the nature and type of engagement and to outline the requirements for the engagement (the exception to this is when a short notice visit is taking place). Once the time and date has been finalised, the EQA will confirm details of the arrangements (a maximum of 10 days before the engagement is due) by submitting a written engagement and sampling plan to the Head of Centre. This will clearly define the roles of all SIAS personnel in attendance for the engagement and may include details of any observations of assessments and marking.

During Centre monitoring engagements EQAs (External Quality Assurers) will review the following:

- Sample assessments to ensure the consistency of marking/grading
- Evidence of valid claims for exemptions and/or RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning)
- Evidence that assessments are structured effectively in terms of planning, assessing, review and feedback
- If applicable, Centre devised assessments to ensure that they meet the requirements of the qualification and associated assessment strategy
- Invigilation, records documents, and procedures
- Evidence that assessors are taking part in standardisation activities
- Evidence of effectively recorded Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers
- Evidence that the Centre is complying with policies and procedures
- Evidence of any conflict of interest that is related to Centre staff, or their family members having undertaken SIAS qualifications
- Internal quality assurance activity that has taken place at the centre
- Assessment locations and satellite sites to ensure that standards are being applied consistently
- Details of any appeals, or reasonable adjustments
- Evidence that the Centre has the appropriate policies and processes in place and is complying with them

The outcome of the Centre Engagement, including outcomes and any actions, will be recorded through the Centre Engagement form on Pinacle.

6.3. Non-compliance/malpractice

In the event of any instances of non-compliance and/or malpractice SIAS reserves the right to apply a sanction to the Centre. Sanctions range in severity from an action plan to loss of recognition as a SIAS Centre. The level of Sanction is determined through a review of the severity of the incident that has led to the Sanction. If a Centre fails to comply with any actions assigned as the outcome of a Sanction, a higher level of Sanction may be applied. For further information on the rationale for applying sanctions and level of sanctions please refer to the Sanctions Policy.

7. Certification

7.1. Process for Claiming Certificates

Centres must implement a robust system to ensure the validity of all certification claims, incorporating a clear and thorough sign-off process.

Centres with a proven track record of high-quality assessment and compliance with our quality assurance standards, may have Direct Claims Status applied. This means that Centres can claim certification for learners without needing each claim to be externally verified before the qualification can be awarded. Direct Claims Status can be removed if the provider fails to maintain the required quality standards and compliance, as evidenced by issues such as inconsistent assessment practices or non-adherence to regulatory requirements.

Centres without Direct Claims Status must undergo External Moderation for each certification claim, meaning that SIAS must sample assessment results before certifications can be awarded. Sample sizes will vary according to the centre's risk rating, track record of the centre and appropriate staff, number of sites and the number of learners.

When learner qualifications are ready to be claimed a Moderation Request Form should be submitted on Pinacle. An EQA will then be allocated who will decide on a sample for the cohort of learners being claimed. Following on from this the EQA will provide feedback and recommend to SIAS whether the certification can be awarded for those learners.

7.2. Invalid Certificates

If Centres claim a certificate in error SIAS must be notified as soon as possible to rectify the error.

If a certificate is found to be invalid, we will notify the appropriate regulatory bodies and any other appropriate parties. A certificate may be found to be invalid in the following circumstances:

• The evidence assessed was not the learner's own work.

• The learner did not complete enough work to achieve the qualification.

• The certificate was claimed based on incorrect records.

7.3. Replacement Certificate / Certificate Amendments

If the original certificate has been lost or there is an error on the original certificate (such as a spelling error with the name) a replacement certificate can be requested from SIAS. For any spelling errors we would require identification to confirm what the correct spelling should be.

8. Updating Centre Information

Centres must inform SIAS of any changes to details since they made their initial application. This would include the following:

- Centre Name and Address

- Centre Contacts and their Contact Details

- Changes to Senior Management staff

- Changes to delivery staff including assessors, trainers and IQAs

- Details of any initial additional sites including satellite sites, alternative assessment venues etc.

Changes to Centre contacts, staff and sites can be updated on Pinacle by the Centre which will then be approved by SIAS.

9. Centre Re-approval

Centre re-approval is carried out by SIAS on a 3-year basis which is supported by yearly (as a minimum) monitoring visits. It will be confirmed with the Centre that they wish to remain recognised by SIAS and are committed to making future registrations. An updated copy of the Centre Agreement will be submitted by SIAS to be signed by the Head of Centre.

10. Withdrawal

Centres should notify SIAS in writing, providing one month's notice, if they wish to 'resign' their centre recognition. Details of the reasons for this request and details of any learners that may be affected should be provided.

Occasionally a centre may cease to operate suddenly will have no opportunity to provide SIAS with due notice. It will be established whether there are any potential or actual adverse effect on any learners and actions will be agreed to protect their interests.

All reasonable steps will be taken to protect the interests of learners affected including:

- Working with centre personnel and/or any learners affected by the withdrawal to transfer them, where possible or feasible, to another centre to enable them to carry on with the qualification(s) they are registered on.

- Issue certificates (e.g. unit or credit certificates) in accordance with the appropriate qualification specifications where learners' achievement can be validated.

Centre withdrawal may also occur as the result of a Level 4 or 5 sanction. For further information on this please refer to the Sanctions Policy.

Following Centre withdrawal all SIAS branding, and logos should be removed from the Centre's website and any promotional material.

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11. Conflicts of Interest

Examples of conflicts of interest for centre staff include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Tutors, assessors, and internal quality assurers who have a close personal or familial connection with a learner, or with the learner's family, should not be involved in decisions regarding the learner's qualification outcomes.

- Tutors, assessors, and internal quality assurers having an interest or involvement in the qualification area being reviewed during a malpractice investigation.

- Staff participating in the recruitment, promotion, supervision, or assessment of individuals with whom they have close personal or family ties.

It is the duty of all tutors, assessors and IQAs to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest. A conflict-of-interest form should be issued for new staff and updated annually.

In some cases, the information disclosed on the form will necessitate follow-up actions to appropriately manage the conflict of interest. The agreed-upon approach between the line manager and the tutor, assessor, or internal quality assurer should be documented, reported to us, and kept with the conflict-of-interest forms.

12. Appeals and Complaints

12.1. Appeals

The types of appeals a Centre can make include results for external and internal assessments, outcome of reasonable adjustment application, imposition of a sanction, and dissatisfaction with complaint outcomes. Learner appeals will only be accepted for review, by SIAS, once the learner has exhausted their Centre's appeal process and if they remain unsatisfied with the outcome. Appeals must be submitted via Pinacle with appropriate evidence. For more details on this please refer to the Appeals Policy.

12.2. Complaints

 A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction regarding our service, such as unfair treatment, poor service standards, or unhelpful staff. Complaints can be raised informally by discussing them with relevant SIAS staff or formally through the Pinacle or via email. If a complaint is upheld, SIAS will review and improve its processes to prevent recurrence. For more details on this please refer to the Complaints Policy.

13. Branding and Marketing Guidelines

Once approved Centres can use the appropriate SIAS Centre branding subject to the terms and conditions of the Centre Agreement.

13.1. Use of SIAS Logo

You may use our logo to support the marketing of our qualifications and products, but it is essential that any information provided is clear and accurate. Learners must be fully informed about the qualification they are studying. To maintain the integrity and consistency of our brand it is important to ensure the following:

- The logo is always scaled uniformly with no stretching, compressing or distortion
- The logo is used in its approved colour schemes
- The logo is not used to imply endorsement of products or services without explicit permission
- The logo is always used against a plain background.

Centres' usage of the SIAS logo will be monitored on a regular basis. Please contact SIAS if you require further advice and guidance on this.

13.2. Representation of SIAS Qualifications and Products

Centres must ensure SIAS qualifications are not advertised promoted or advertised in a way which is misleading to learners.

You must not make any representations which lead learners to believe a qualification is regulated when it is not. This includes SIAS Endorsed/Accredited products.

14. Centre Support

14.1. Useful Contacts

SIAS Role	Responsibilities
Partnership and Growth Manager	The first point of contact for new Centres and will provide initial support in terms of the application process. They can also help Centres explore new opportunities and grow their provision.
Centre Relationship Manager	On Approval every Centre will have a designated Relationship Manager to provide ongoing support and guidance.
External Quality Assurer	Centre monitoring visits will be carried out by an External Quality Assurer. They will complete a report on completion of the visit with recommendations and actions.

For more detailed information on our products and services, please visit our website or contact us directly. We are here to support you every step of the way, ensuring you have all the tools and guidance you need:

Phone number: 01925 515 200
Email: info@siasuk.com

SIAS