



# **CENTRE HANDBOOK**

**September 2018**

## CONTENTS

	Page No
1. INTRODUCTION .....	4
2. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY .....	4
3. CENTRE REGISTER .....	4
4. QUALIFICATION SPECIFICATIONS .....	4 – 5
5. UPDATING OUR CURRICULUM .....	5
6. CURRICULUM SUPPORT .....	5
7. CHANGE OF CENTRE INFORMATION .....	6
8. CHANGE OF TRAINING VENUE .....	6
9. ADDITIONAL SITES .....	6 – 7
10. ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION(S) .....	7
11. TRAINING PREMISES .....	7 – 8
12. SPOT CHECKS .....	8
13. ADDITIONAL TEACHING STAFF .....	8 – 9
14. PROBATION .....	9
15. MONITORING .....	9 – 10
16. RISK MANAGEMENT .....	10
17. CONFLICT OF INTEREST .....	10
18. MALPRACTICE & MALADMINISTRATION .....	10 – 11
19. WHISTLEBLOWING .....	11
20. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & DIVERSITY .....	11
21. DATA PROTECTION .....	11
22. RETENTION OF RECORDS .....	11 – 12
23. REGISTERING STUDENTS .....	12
24. PROCESSING STUDENT MEMBERSHIP .....	12
25. LEARNER MEMBERSHIP .....	12 – 13
26. LEARNER SUPPORT AREA .....	13
27. CHANGE OF STUDENTS INFORMATION .....	13
28. INFORMATION PROVIDED TO LEARNERS .....	13 – 14
29. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	14
30. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING .....	15
31. COMPULSORY COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENTS .....	15
32. MOCK EXAMINATIONS .....	16
33. CHEATING & PLAGIARISM .....	16
34. IFA EXTERNALLY INVIGILATED EXAMINATIONS .....	16- 17
35. SCHEDULING EXAMINATION DATES .....	17

36.	EXAMINATION LOCATION .....	18
37.	EXAMINATION VENUE .....	18 - 19
38.	QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSESSORS .....	19
39.	EXAM CANCELLATION .....	19
40.	CANDIDATE CANCELLATION .....	20
41.	LEARNER TRANSFER .....	20 - 21
42.	EXAMINATION PROCEDURE .....	21
43.	LANGUAGE OF THE ASSESSMENT .....	21
44.	EXAMINATION RESULTS .....	21
45.	EXAMINATION CERTIFICATES .....	22
46.	IFA QUALIFICATION(S) .....	23
47.	REISSUING EXAMINATION CERTIFICATES .....	23
48.	EXAMINATION FEEDBACK .....	23
49.	RESUBMITTING COURSEWORK .....	23 - 24
50.	EXAMINATION FAILURE .....	24
51.	RESITTING EXAMINATIONS .....	24
52.	APPEALS AGAINST EXAMINATION RESULTS .....	24
53.	LEARNER WITHDRAWAL .....	24 - 25
54.	CENTRE WITHDRAWAL .....	25
55.	COMPLAINTS RAISED AGAINST A CENTRE .....	25
56.	SANCTIONS .....	25
57.	APPEALS PROCEDURE .....	25
58.	REFRESHER COURSES .....	25 - 26
59.	UPGRADING APPLICANTS WITH A PRE-EXISTING QUALIFICATION ....	26
60.	CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) COURSES .....	27
61.	LOST POST .....	27
62.	DAMAGED POST .....	27
63.	REISSUING .....	27 - 28
64.	CENTRE SUPPORT AREA .....	28
65.	SERVICE FEES .....	28
66.	ACCOUNTS & INVOICES .....	28
67.	RENEWAL OF APPROVAL .....	28 - 29
68.	CUSTOMER SERVICE .....	29
69.	COMMUNICATIONS .....	29
70.	UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR .....	29 - 31
71.	FEEDBACK .....	31
72.	MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT .....	31

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Centre is required to comply with the terms contained within this document and the policies and procedures that relate to it. This handbook also provides Centres with helpful information and guidance to be referred to throughout delivery of IFA Qualification(s).

Essentially, the Centre Agreement explains what you are required to do and the Centre Handbook explains how you do it and the support available.

## **2. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

- a) The Centre will at all times comply with the IFA's Terms of Use of Syllabi Policy and Terms of Use of Logo Policy.
- b) The Centre must purchase a copy of the syllabus of the course they are delivering for each teacher registered at the Centre.
  - Centres can download the logo(s) appropriate to the Qualification(s) they are approved to deliver in the Centre Support Area.
  - Centres can purchase the Qualification syllabi in the centre shop, which they can access by logging into the website.

## **3. CENTRE REGISTER**

Approved Centres will appear on the IFA's 'Approved Provider' directory on the IFA website. The directory will display the Centre's business name, inspected and approved venue address, specify which Qualification(s) are delivered, name the teachers at the Centre and provide the Centre's contact details.

The Approved Centre Certificate, Centre Logo and entry onto the Centre register is evidence of being approved.

## **4. QUALIFICATION SPECIFICATIONS**

- a) The Centre must teach all components of the course as specified in the syllabus, unless the learner is exempt from repeating a particular module under the Recognition of Prior Learning and Exemption Policy.
- b) An overview of the contents of each IFA course leading to an IFA Qualification can be found on the IFA's website. In the Centre Support Area of the IFA's website, Centres can download course description(s) for use on their website.
- c) The specifications for each IFA Qualification(s) is published on the IFA's website including the assessment criteria and structure which contains information regarding methods of delivery.

- d) All IFA Qualifications(s) are assessed through external and internal assessments. Detailed examination procedures and compulsory coursework forms to be completed by the Centre's Principal Teacher can be found in the Centre Support Area.
- e) No IFA courses can be delivered concurrently (side by side) to learners as each course explores aromatherapy from a different perspective to be applied in different contexts.

## **5. UPDATING THE CURRICULUM**

To ensure the curriculum remains current, the IFA will update its curriculum content from time to time. This usually takes place every five (5) years. In this instance the Centre will be sent a copy of the updated version of the syllabus (free of charge) with a cover letter highlighting the changes that have been made. This will replace the previous version. The Centre will automatically be approved to deliver the updated version.

## **6. CURRICULUM SUPPORT**

- a) The IFA Syllabi provide the learning outcomes and competencies to be achieved in each IFA Qualification. Teachers are required to prepare their own teaching notes. The syllabi also include additional useful notes for certain components and sample examination questions.
- b) To assist teachers when creating teaching notes, the Centre Support Area of the IFA website, includes a research search facility where Centres can find links to filtered clinical trials and research papers by essential oil, carrier oil, therapeutic property, medical condition, ailment and/or by a natural progression in the body, all of which relate to the IFA syllabi. However Centres acknowledge that research trials are not available for all elements of the syllabi. Information regarding qualitative and quantitative research and case studies can also be found in the Centre Support Area. The research search is continually being updated and is provided for expediency purposes only. Teachers are required to do their own research and ensure their teaching notes reflect the latest developments and evidence based practice.
- c) All questions relating to curriculum content will be referred to either the research search facility or the recommended reading list.
- d) The IFA will not assist Centres in the creation of teaching notes. However, the IFA will, from time to time, provide Centres and learner access to various workshops, conferences and events at a discounted rate, where they can hear talks from various field subject specialists and some sample teacher notes. The IFA's journal the Aromatherapy Times also provides information that support its syllabi content. Centres may request that the IFA source particular information to be included in future editions by completing the Centre Feedback form found in the Centre Support Area.

## **7. CHANGE OF CENTRE INFORMATION**

- a) If a Centre's information changes from that which was specified on its Application Form (and approved), for example, change of address, change of name, change of tutor or other staff, change of ownership or change of email etc., the Centre must complete and submit the Change of Centre Information Request Form.

\*Please note the Centre only needs to complete the part of the form that relates to the requested change.

- b) Once received, and dependent on the nature of the change, the IFA will confirm in writing if the change has been approved and will also update the Centre's details in the IFA's Aromatherapy Times magazine and website accordingly.
- c) If a Centre changes name the original Centre certificate must be returned before a new Centre certificate is issued. An administration fee will be charged as per the Service Fee policy.
- d) If a Centre changes name to a name similar to another IFA Approved Centre the IFA will require proof that the Centre's new business/company name is registered in the country of origin before granting approval.

## **8. CHANGE OF TRAINING VENUE**

- a) Centres will promptly notify the IFA if they intend to move premises.
- b) An inspection of the new premises will be required before the Centre is approved to train learners from it.
- c) The Centre will complete the Change of Centre Information Request Form.
- d) An invoice will then be raised and the Centre will pay the related fee, as per the Service Fee Policy.
- e) An inspection date will be organised, which will typically take place when a Quality Assurance Assessor is scheduled to conduct examinations in the area.
- f) If a Centre changes training venue without inspection, this amounts to malpractice and sanctions will be applied.

## **9. ADDITIONAL SITES**

- a) The Centre may apply to open additional teaching outlets provided the Centre has met the criteria as per the Centre Agreement clause 15.
- b) To apply, the Centre must complete the Additional Site Application Form found on the IFA's website.

- c) All additional sites will be required to pay the registration and inspection fee, as per the Service Fee Policy.
- d) The Centre may also register additional teachers to deliver Qualification(s) from these additional sites by completing the Additional Tutor Application Form available on the IFA's website and pay the relevant registration fee as per the Service Fee Policy.

## **10. ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION(S)**

- a) The teaching and learning criteria vary between IFA Qualifications. Therefore, verification of the Centre's ability to appropriately deliver other IFA syllabi remains a prerequisite of approval.
- b) The Centre may apply to deliver additional IFA Qualification(s) by completing the Additional Qualifications Application Form available on the IFA's website. This includes:
  - i. Supplying the relevant additional qualification certificates for teachers (as the prior learning prerequisite to teach each IFA Qualification varies);
  - ii. Subsequent registration of the teacher to deliver the specific IFA Qualification (if not already registered);
  - iii. Providing sample course notes.
- c) Requests for additional Qualification(s) will only be considered where the Centre's internal quality assurance processes are proven to be robust and effective i.e. the Centre must be in good standing with good examination results.
- d) The IFA will inspect the provisions for the delivery of additional Qualification(s) when a Quality Assurance Assessor visit is scheduled at the Centre. This will be free of charge, provided it is delivered from the same venue already approved.

## **11. TRAINING PREMISES**

- a) The Centre and any of its additional training sites must ensure it remains compliant with the relevant Health and Safety laws and Site Approval Checklist.
- b) Centres whose venues are not appropriately prepared or do not comply will be provided with an action report before approval is granted.
- c) The Centre will be liable for the Quality Assurance Assessor's return visit and expenses as per the Service Fees Policy.
- d) Any modification of the training premises post the original inspection will invalidate approval of the original inspection and the Centre will be required to have the premises re-inspected.

- e) In the event of modification, the IFA will aim to inspect the premises when a Quality Assurance Assessor visit is scheduled to minimise costs for the Centre.
  - Centres can download a sample template Health and Safety Policy in the Centre Support Area.
  - Centres can download a sample template Accident & Incident Log in the Centre Support Area.

## **12. SPOT CHECKS**

- a) The IFA may conduct both announced and unannounced spot checks at the Centre's premises. Centres will be randomly selected.
- b) The Centre will ensure all learner portfolios and teaching material are available for inspection and training premises maintained as appropriate.
- c) A minimum of 24 hours' notice will be provided for unannounced visits.
- d) A fee will not be applied to the Centre for spot checks.
- e) If a Centre does not provide access, this will constitute malpractice and sanctions will be applied to the Centre. Centres must fully cooperate with the IFA's monitoring activities at all times.

## **13. ADDITIONAL TEACHING STAFF**

- a) All teachers delivering any part of IFA Qualification(s) must be registered with the IFA and meet the Teachers Approval Criteria.
- b) The Centre will ensure the registered Principal Teacher stated on the Application Form, delivers a minimum of 75% of IFA Qualification(s).
- c) The Centre may employ Assistant Teachers to teach up to 25% of IFA Qualification(s) or employ trainee tutors to shadow the Principal teacher until they have accrued the necessary experience. Principal teachers will supervise both Trainee Teachers and Assistant Teachers, whilst training is in progress. The Centre will confirm when the training is complete and supply to the IFA the Teacher Monitoring Completion Form before the IFA will approve upgrading a teacher's status.
- d) The Centre may register additional teachers to assist in the delivery of Qualification(s) by completing the Additional Tutor Application Form available on the IFA's website.
- e) The IFA may also direct a Centre to employ additional or alternative staff to ensure learners receive a consistent level of service if this is highlighted during monitoring activities.

- f) If a Centre is found to have an unregistered teacher delivery IFA Qualification(s) at their Centre, this constitutes malpractice and sanctions will be applied.

#### **14. PROBATION**

- a) The Centre and any additional sites will be placed on probation for the first year after initial approval is granted or until their first set of examination results.
- b) If examination results reach a 70% pass rate (of all learners) the Centres probation period will end.
- c) If results fall below the pass rate the Centre will be provided with an action plan in order to improve their performance and the probation period will be extended.
- d) Centres with consistently low pass grades will be placed back on probation.
- e) Centres who fail to act upon recommendations within a reasonable time frame will have their approval withdrawn.

Please note: Withdrawal of Centres approved status is a last resort. The IFA will endeavour to support the Centre to develop and improve its performance wherever practical during monitoring activities.

#### **15. MONITORING**

- a) The Centre is responsible for the performance of its teaching staff.
- b) The IFA will monitor teacher's performance through examination results.
- c) The IFA will endeavour to support Centres whose training falls below standard and will either visit the Centre to provide further support, direct the Centre's staff to educational workshops, additional teacher training or refer them to specific text books, and through other such activities to improve performance.
- d) During the initial inspection visitation, the IFA Quality Assurance Assessor may request to oversee the massage techniques applied, essential oil blending techniques and, for PEOT teacher applicants, product making ability. Alternatively the IFA may request that the Centre send a DVD of teaching in progress at any given time. A feedback report will be provided and any areas that require improvement will be highlighted on the report. If a teacher's techniques are highlighted, the IFA may recommend that an IFA representative visit the Centre to spend between 1 – 2 days reviewing techniques to ensure conformity to IFA standards. The IFA representative's fee and travel and accommodation expenses if required will be payable by the Centre.
- e) The IFA may also request, at any time, details of methods used for assessing any and all specific units, marking sheets and seating plans, and when appropriate, records of requests for reasonable adjustment and special requirements, records of internal

quality assurance reviews, learners attendance forms, monitoring and professional development activities of staff and appeals or complaints received for external audit.

- f) We recommend that Centres review their teacher's performance periodically through student feedback and other methods as per the Approval Criteria.

## **16. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- a) The Centre will identify risks in relation to their premises, staff and business activities.
- b) The Centre will adopt a risk management policy in keeping with the IFA's principles.
  - Centres may download a sample template Risk Management Policy in the Centre Support Area of the website.

## **17. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

- a) The Centre will adopt a conflict of interest policy in keeping with the IFA's principles.
- b) The Centre must complete and provide to the IFA, the Annual Declaration of Interests Form, which includes declaring the Centre's business activities.
- c) The IFA will review the Centre's interest declarations before extending approval for another year.
- d) If it is discovered upon investigation, or at any time whilst holding approved status, that a conflict of interest was not appropriately declared or intentionally withheld, approval will immediately be withdrawn. No refund of the annual fee will be granted in this instance.
- e) The Centre will be responsible for providing learners at the practical examination with independent models free from conflict of interest. The Centre must complete and provide to the Quality Assurance Assessor on the day of the practical examination the Assessment Personnel Conflict of Interest Form in which the Centre undertakes and confirms that no model or interpreter is connected in any way to a learner.
  - Centres can download a sample template Conflict of Interest Policy and the relevant conflict of interest forms in the Centre Support Area.

## **18. MALPRACTICE & MALADMINISTRATION**

- a) The Centre will adopt a malpractice and maladministration policy in keeping with the IFA's Malpractice and Maladministration policy, which describes acts that constitute a material breach.

- b) The process of investigating malpractice and maladministration at a Centre can be instigated as a result of a complaint or the IFA being made aware of new information, in which case the Centre needs to account for its actions to remain registered.
  - Centres can download a sample template Malpractice and Maladministration Policy in the Centre Support Area.

## **19. WHISTLEBLOWING**

The Centre must inform the IFA if it becomes aware of any activities that could impact on the integrity of IFA Qualification(s) and complete the whistleblowing form found in the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

## **20. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & DIVERSITY**

The Centre will adopt an equal opportunity and diversity policy in keeping with the IFA's Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy.

- Centres can download a sample template Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy in the Centre Support Area.

## **21. DATA PROTECTION**

The Centre will adopt a Data Protection policy in keeping with the IFA's Data Protection Policy.

- Centres can download a sample template Data Protection Policy, a sample template Privacy Policy and a sample Data Processing Consent Form in the Centre Support Area.

## **22. RETENTION OF RECORDS**

- a) The Centre will maintain secure and up to date records, which the IFA may request to access from time to time.
- b) The Centre will retain learners' records for a minimum of three (3) years in either electronic or paper format.

NB. Portfolios presented at the practical examination do not need to be stored on file and can be returned to the learner on the day of assessment to be referred to throughout their careers.

- c) The IFA will retain copies of assessment/examination results on its system indefinitely, as per the IFA's Data Retention & Disposal Policy.

- Centres can download a sample template Record Retention and Disposal Policy in the Centre Support Area.

### **23. REGISTERING STUDENTS**

- a) The Centre will register with the IFA all students enrolled on an IFA Qualification using the Student Registration Form found in the Centre Support Area.
- b) The Centre must register a minimum of six (6) students per year per IFA Qualification to be eligible to renew. This also applies to any additional sites the Centre registers.
- c) The Centre will register learners with the IFA within four (4) weeks of enrolling on an IFA Qualification.
- d) All Centres must complete the form in full and calculate the amount required to be paid.
- e) All incomplete forms will be returned to the Centre.
- f) The IFA will not issue invoices for student registration. The student registration list with payment details on the last page in the form of an invoice will be confirmation for accounts. All Centres will be sent the streamline receipt with student ID cards.
- g) On the student registration form the Centre will also indicate the duration of delivery of the course to enable the IFA to gain an idea of when to schedule examinations in a country.

### **24. PROCESSING STUDENT MEMBERSHIP**

- a) All membership applications are typically processed and confirmed by post within five (5) working days of receipt of all the relevant documentation and required fee.
- b) When a learner registers as a student member confirmation will be sent to the Centre with a student ID card for each learner. Learners must bring their student ID card to IFA externally invigilated examinations as proof of identity.
- c) For Centres who are registering six (6) or more learners at one time (not one-off renewals), this will be sent via recorded delivery and the Centre will be provided with a tracking number and can therefore track the parcel themselves online. Centres who register less than six (6) learners, their confirmation letters and students ID cards will be sent second class (untracked).

### **25. LEARNER MEMBERSHIP**

- a) The Centre must ensure that all learners enrolled on an IFA Qualification(s) hold continuous student membership throughout their studies.

- b) The expiry date specified on the student ID card represents the maximum amount of time that the learner has to complete an IFA Qualification.
- c) If a learner requires an extension to membership, a fee will be applied as per the Service Fee Policy and the Centre may be required to complete the Special Consideration Form.
- d) Once a student has graduated (passed the IFA externally invigilated examinations) their student membership will automatically terminate.

## **26. LEARNER SUPPORT AREA**

- a) Once registered as a member, learners can access the learner support area by signing into the IFA's website.

It is important that Centres register learners with the IFA as stipulated so they can access the information and enjoy the benefits available to them.

- b) Individual sign in details for each student will be provided on each student's confirmation letter.
- c) It is the Centre's responsibility to distribute the confirmation letter and student ID card to learners expediently once received.
- d) All registered learners will receive the Aromatherapy Times magazine which will be posted second class to the learner's personal address as recorded on file. The only exception to this rule is for those who reside in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan. To assist our learners in these countries we supply a translated digital version online in the learner support area alongside the digital version of the English copy. The spring, summer and autumn editions are provided in digital format and only the winter edition will be sent by post.
  - Centres may also access the Aromatherapy Times online in the Centre Support Area.

## **27. CHANGE OF STUDENTS INFORMATION**

- a) The Centre will inform the IFA of changes to student's information and complete the Change of Student Information Form in the Centre Support Area.
- b) If the learner requires a replacement student ID card e.g. due to a name change, loss or damage, the Centre can order this through the IFA shop.

## **28. INFORMATION PROVIDED TO LEARNERS**

- a) The Centre will provide learners with a contract or agreement to ensure that learners understand their responsibilities in relation to the Centre and the Centre's

responsibilities in relation to the learner. The Centre will also make clear to learners the IFA's role in relation to the Centre and ensure they have read the Learner Handbook.

- b) Learners should not need to contact the IFA directly, unless they wish to exercise their right to complain about a Centre following the Complaints Policy.
- c) We recommend that Centres allow learners to visit the training premises and answer any questions they may have before enrolling learners. The IFA does not recommend that the Centre sell IFA Qualification(s), to learners through an online shop such as Baidu, Ebay, Taobao or any other selling network.
  - Centres can download a sample Student Contract template from the Centre Support Area.

## **29. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- a) The Centre and the IFA will apply reasonable adjustment as set out in its Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy available on the IFA's website.
- b) The Centre will notify the IFA of any learners with special needs and/or specific requirements, and acquire and provide the relevant certificates to the IFA when registering students.
- c) The Centre will provide the IFA with a written report detailing the reasonable adjustment(s) they will apply to support learners with special requirements or inform the IFA if they refuse a learner access to Qualification(s) on the grounds that they cannot meet such requirements.
- d) Centres are required to ensure all the necessary equipment is in place to support learners with special requirements during IFA externally invigilated examinations.
- e) In the event a venue is hired by the IFA to undertake examinations and the Centre has not appropriately informed the IFA of learner(s) with special requirements, the Centre will be liable for any additional fees incurred by the IFA to make the necessary adaptations to accommodate the learner e.g. the hiring of an additional room, equipment etc. In any such case the IFA or venue hired by the IFA cannot guarantee they will be able to accommodate such requests without reasonable notice.
- f) All requests for special considerations must be submitted using the Special Considerations Form found in the Centre Support Area.
- g) All applications for special considerations submitted either by the Centre or a individual learner will be judged on a case by case basis.

### **30. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING**

- a) The Centre and the IFA will apply recognition of prior learning as set out in its Recognition of Prior Learning and Exemption Policy available on the IFA's website.
- b) The Centre will obtain records of learners' prior achievements and transferal of credits for equivalences and exemptions from attending certain units/classes.
- c) The Centre may use its own discretion when granting exemption from classes but is not authorised to exempt any learner from an IFA externally invigilated examination. The Centre must obtain permission from the IFA when registering learners and the IFA will officially grant/refuse exemption by supplying a letter of confirmation to the learner via the Centre.
- d) The Centre will ensure learners' submissions for exemption also comply with Recognition of Prior Learning and Exemption Policy acceptance time limitations, as prescribed in the Recognition of Prior Learning and Exemption Policy, before submitting to the IFA.
- e) The Centre will also obtain records of learners' qualifications to ensure they have met any prerequisite requirements as stated on the Qualification's specifications (currently prerequisites only apply to the PEOT course). If the Centre cannot provide satisfactory evidence of learners' prerequisite qualifications upon request, sanctions will be applied to the Centre.

### **31. COMPULSORY COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENTS**

- a) Before entering a learner into an IFA externally invigilated examination, the Centre must ensure the learner has completed all compulsory coursework as specified in the Qualification(s) specifications.
- b) All compulsory coursework assignment forms can be found in the Centre Support Area, which must be completed for each learner, marked, verified and signed by the Principal Teacher and provided to the Quality Assurance Assessor on the day of the practical examination.
- c) If the Centre does enter one or more learners into examinations without completed coursework (which contributes to the learners' overall grade) the Centre will be liable for the Quality Assurance Assessors return visit fee of £150.00 plus travel and a penalty fee will be applied to the Centre as per the Service Fee Policy.
- d) If the costs to revisit the Centre are disproportionate e.g. the Centre is based outside of the UK, learners will be required to send completed coursework to the IFA Head Office within eight (8) weeks of the examination date and the Centre will pay the reassessment of coursework fee for each learner as prescribed in the Service Fees Policy. This fee applies for any, or all, missing paperwork, as a Quality Assurance Assessor will be required to visit the IFA Head Office to mark the work and an interpreter/translator if necessary.

### **32. MOCK EXAMINATIONS**

- a) Centres will find sample exam questions at the end of each unit in the syllabus. All Centres will create their own mock examination papers for learners, which the IFA may request to view a copy from time to time as part of our monitoring activities.
- b) All Centres will ensure learners have passed mock examinations before entering learners into an IFA externally invigilated examination. Mock examinations must be conducted under the same conditions as the IFA's externally invigilated examinations, as far as possible.
- c) If the majority of learners underperform in IFA externally invigilated examinations or trends highlight certain components have not been taught effectively by the Centre, the IFA will request that the Centre provide evidence of internal examinations having taken place e.g. request mock examination papers and answers, delivery timetable.

### **33. CHEATING & PLAGIARISM**

- a) The Centre will ensure that all work produced by the learner is the learners own work as per the IFA's Cheating and Plagiarism Policy.
- b) During IFA externally invigilated examinations the IFA will take action regarding learners who have been found to have cheated as stated in the examination procedures found in the Centre Support Area.
- c) If a learner is found to have cheated in an externally invigilated examination they will automatically be failed/paper invalidated and will not be able to re-enter into examinations or be an IFA member in future. This will also be recorded on the Centres record. Sanctions will not necessarily be imposed on the Centre for their learner's behaviour; however the IFA may ask the Centre to implement more rigorous rules to discourage this behaviour.

### **34. IFA EXTERNALLY INVIGILATED EXAMINATIONS**

- a) IFA Qualifications are only awarded to those who have successfully completed the IFA externally invigilated examinations.
- b) Quality Assurance Assessors will visit the Centre to conduct examinations.
- c) Examinations will be held at the Centre within two (2) years of being granted initial approval, which will allow the Centre reasonable opportunity to set up and establish an IFA course. This rule also applies to any additional sites or additional IFA Qualification(s) the Centre delivers.
- d) Thereafter the Centre must request a Quality Assurance Assessor visit at their Centre to conduct examinations at least every two (2) years. The only exception to this rule is if the Centre delivers the course over 24 months (which is the maximum amount of time to deliver an IFA Diploma Qualification), in which case the Centre has one (1)

additional year to hold examinations as evidence in their course delivery timetable submitted at the time of approval.

- e) The Centre will also highlight the course terms times on the Student Registration Form e.g. September 2017 – March 2019, which we understand can be subject to change to meet learner's requirements. From this information, the IFA will ascertain if the Centre requires examinations to be held every 2 years or every year.
- f) The Centre will ensure all learners undertake the IFA examinations within one (1) year of completing an IFA course. If an extension is required, the Centre will complete the Special Considerations Form.
- g) The Centre must enter a minimum of six (6) learners into examinations to be eligible to request a Quality Assurance Assessor visitation.
- h) In the event the Centre does not have six (6) learners to enter, the Centre will either be invoiced the shortfall to hold the examination at their Centre, organise the learners to undertake examination(s) at another Centre as per the IFA's Transfer Policy, or the Centre will enter learners into examinations when they are able to submit the minimum amount of learners.

### **35. SCHEDULING EXAMINATION DATES**

- a) The Centre will book examinations/assessments with the IFA four (4) months in advance and provide the IFA with an Exam Candidate List.
- b) The Exam Candidate List(s) Form can be found in the Centre Support Area.
- c) The Centre must put the IFA student membership number of each exam candidate next to their name. Any forms which do not supply this information will be returned to the Centre. The Centre cannot add or enter additional learners at this time, who are not already registered students. The IFA reserves the right to refuse learners a place in an examination if they were not registered at the appropriate time by the Centre.
- d) Each year the IFA will provide the Centre with various dates during a stipulated month on which a Quality Assurance Assessor is available and provide the Centre with a date(s) for examinations. The IFA will endeavour to accommodate the Centres requested date(s) when and where possible, but the IFA cannot guarantee this.
- e) If the Centre does not complete and forward the Exam Candidate List to the IFA within the stipulated timescale, the IFA will assume the Centre is not entering candidates into examinations that year. One reminder will be sent.
- f) The IFA will arrange the Quality Assurance Assessors' schedule based on the information provided by the Centre in the Exam Candidate List. The IFA will then raise an invoice.
- g) The IFA will arrange time slots with Quality Assurance Assessors for practical examinations. A maximum of eight (8) learners may be assessed in one slot, either in

the morning or afternoon, and the IFA will book the number of slots according to the Exam Candidate List provided by the Centre.

- h) The Centre will inform learners of the date and time of their examinations once the IFA have agreed and confirmed this in writing. Please note premature announcement of unconfirmed dates may cause disruption and inconvenience.

### **36. EXAMINATION LOCATION**

- a) The IFA will allocate an IFA Quality Assurance Assessor to visit the Centre to conduct examinations.
- b) As a general rule all IFA externally invigilated examinations will be held at the Centre.
- c) However, if there is a large volume of exam candidates situated in one region, the IFA may stipulate a centralised location for theory examinations. In this instance the IFA will advise the Centre of the venue when scheduling examinations.

### **37. EXAMINATION VENUE**

- a) The Centre will allow Quality Assurance Assessors to rearrange seating and spacing between exam candidates as they see fit during examination visitations.
- b) The Centre must ensure that practical examinations are conducted in one room at their premises and is fully equipped.

\* Please note for Centres with more than eight (8) learners, the examination will be conducted in the same room but learners will be split into allocated time slots as per point 35g. The Centre will organise which learners attend which slot.

- c) If this is not possible the Centre will bring this to the attention of the IFA when scheduling examinations who will advise that the Centre either hire a room with the necessary space and/or additional equipment or transfer the learners to another Centre as per the IFA's Transfer Policy.
- d) If the Centre does not correctly notify the IFA, the IFA will not be liable if they are subsequently unable to accommodate the Centre on the day, as the Quality Assurance Assessor may be attending to examinations at other Centres later on the same day. In this instance the Centre will be invoiced for the examiner's return visit fee of £150.00 plus their travel.
- e) Equally, if the Centres examination venue cannot accommodate six (6) learners to perform the massage sequence (for the Professional Aromatherapy Diploma course) as per the Approval Criteria for any other reason or cannot implement the IFA's advice (36c) and the Quality Assurance Assessor therefore cannot conduct examinations in one allocated slot, the Centre will be liable for the Quality Assurance Assessors additional time slot allocation to accommodate the Centres learners, which was unnecessarily incurred.

For example, if a Centre has six (6) learners but the venue only has equipment to enable four (4) learners to take an examination at one time, the Centre will be invoiced for the Quality Assurance Assessors additional time slot allocation.

- f) The Centre will work collaboratively with the Quality Assurance Assessor to ensure that learners taking examinations in the morning have no contact with the afternoon group of learners.

### **38. QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSESSORS**

- a) The Centre will not be informed of who the Quality Assurance Assessor allocated to their Centre will be (to prevent interference with the quality assurance process) nor may a Centre request a particular person.
- b) No Centre or its staff may contact or enter into discussions with an IFA Quality Assurance Assessor regarding the contents of examinations or marking during hospitable activities or otherwise.
- c) The Quality Assurance Assessor may contact the Centre to discuss travel arrangements for their visit but usually this will be provided by the IFA. Where possible we ask that Centres residing outside of the UK pick the IFA Quality Assurance Assessor up from their hotel to avoid travel disruptions and that Centres based within the UK reserve a parking space, if possible.
- d) The Centre will not attempt to entice IFA Quality Assurance Assessors or IFA representatives to undertake non IFA/ private work for their Centre. To do so potentially creates a conflict of interest and undermines the integrity of the examination and/or inspection process. IFA Quality Assurance Assessors are obliged as per their contract with the IFA to inform the IFA if a Centre does this. In this instance the Centre will be liable for the costs of sending another examiner.
- e) Quality Assurance Assessors are not authorised to speak on behalf of the IFA or represents its views.

### **39. EXAM CANCELLATION**

- a) If the Centre cancels examination(s) at their Centre after they have been confirmed three (3) months or less before the examination date, examination(s) fees will be non-refundable and the Centre will be liable for the examiner's fee of £150.00 per day, plus travel and accommodation if booked in advance or the cancellation fee if the IFA is able to cancel such arrangements.
- b) If the IFA or Centre need to cancel a Quality Assurance Assessor visitation to the Centre due to unforeseeable circumstances outside of its control e.g. extreme weather conditions, the exam will be cancelled and fees transferred until the next available opportunity.

#### **40. CANDIDATE CANCELLATION**

- a) The Centre will inform the IFA as soon as possible if a learner is unable to attend their examination and will complete the Special Consideration Form for each learner.
- b) No refund of examination fees will be granted for invalid reasons or non-attendance but the examination fee may be transferred for valid reasons.
- c) The Centre will be invoiced a £20.00 administration charge for each candidate who cancels an examination with a valid reason, as per the Service fees Policy.
- d) Valid and unavoidable reasons for cancellation include instances such as, health issues, accident, or family bereavement. Supportive evidence must be provided e.g. the relevant certificate. In this instance the learner will be re-entered into examinations at the next available opportunity and the examination fee will be transferred. If the learner is seriously injured or impaired due to illness or an accident, the examination fee will automatically be refunded.
- e) For the avoidance of doubt, pregnancy will not be accepted as a reason to cancel a theory examination however, it will be accepted as a valid reason for cancellation of a practical examination.
- f) Learners whose arms or hands are bandaged may not enter a practical examination in the interest of upholding safe practice. The Centre will re-schedule the learner at the next available opportunity when the risk has been removed. If a learner has an allergy to a particular essential oil or base product the Centre will bring this to the attention of the IFA when registering the learner and inform the IFA of the reasonable adjustment they will apply. The IFA will then agree how or if the examination process can be adapted, this will be judged on a case by case basis.
- g) The maximum amount of times that a learner may be absent from an examination, regardless if it is for valid or invalid reason is three (3). After this time elapse the learner will be required to retake the course.
- h) The Centre is to remind learners not to enter into examinations until all foreseeable circumstances have been taken into account.

#### **41. LEARNER TRANSFER**

- a) A learner may transfer between IFA Centres if the learner relocates during the examination period or if the Centre does not have the minimum amount of learners (6) to hold examinations at the Centre.
- b) The IFA expects Centres and learners to manage this process internally between themselves and cooperate with one another. In exceptional circumstances, where the Centre and learner have exhausted all other avenues of resolution and/or relocation, the IFA will arrange for learners to be transferred to another IFA Centre or venue as per the IFA's Transfer Policy available on the IFA's website.

- c) Centres who receive 'transferred' learners may require a fee to accommodate additional learners due to hiring a larger venue etc., however the IFA will not get involved, intervene or comment on such arrangements.
- d) Requests to transfer during training time due to learners being unsatisfied with the service provided at the Centre will follow the Complaints Policy.

#### **42. EXAMINATION PROCEDURE**

- a) Learners will take their ID card to examinations as proof and validation of their identity.
- b) The Centre can find the examination procedure for each IFA Qualification(s) they are delivering in the Centre Support Area of the IFA's website.
- c) The Centre must adhere to the examination procedure as specified for each IFA Qualification(s).

#### **43. LANGUAGE OF THE ASSESSMENT**

- a) IFA externally invigilated examinations will usually be conducted in English.
- b) If the Centre requires examinations to be conducted in a language other than English, the Centre will supply its own translator. The Centre will ensure that the translator is not involved with delivering any part of Qualification(s) and complete the Assessment Personnel Conflict of Interest Form available in the Centre Support Area of the IFA's website. In doing so, the Centre undertakes and confirms that the interpreter is not connected in any way to a learner.
- c) The translator may only translate what the IFA Quality Assurance Assessor is saying and not prompt learners. If, at any time, the IFA Quality Assurance Assessor becomes concerned that the translator is prompting learners thereby undermining the validity of the examination, the assessor may request a replacement translator. If a replacement translator is not available the Centre will be liable for the IFA Quality Assurance Assessor's return visit fee, as per the Service Fees Policy.

#### **44. EXAMINATION RESULTS**

- a) The IFA will dispatch examination results within eight (8) weeks of the exam. This time scale is necessary for marking, administration and translation where necessary.
- b) Centres must not contact the IFA within the eight (8) week timeframe regarding results.
- c) All results will be typed, tabled and issued to the Centre. Centres are responsible for informing learners of their results individually. Learners may not contact the IFA directly regarding examination results and, if they do so, be referred back to their Centre.

#### **45. EXAMINATION CERTIFICATES**

- a) The Centre will distribute all examination certificates for successful learners, received from the IFA office, in a timely manner.
- b) Certificates will not be issued until the learner has successfully completed and passed all examination and assessment components (not in part).
- c) Examination Certificates for successful learners will be dispatched with the results overview cover sheet. Unsuccessful learners will be provided a letter of confirmation of the examination(s) they need to retake in order to pass.
- d) Examinations certificates for six (6) or more learners (not one-off reissuing) will be sent via recorded delivery and the Centre will be provided with a tracking number and can therefore track the parcel themselves online. Centres who have less than six (6) certificates to be issued to learners this will be sent second class (untracked).
- e) For each successful graduate the IFA will also send an application form for IFA postgraduate membership, for the Centre to distribute to its learners. The Centre should encourage learners to take up postgraduate membership which enables newly qualified aromatherapists to be registered on the IFA directory of therapists. This allows potential employees and clients check to verify a therapist's qualification.

Membership uptake and membership renewal creates better opportunities for the IFA to demonstrate its presence in a country or region and improves the IFA's ability to positively support members' continual professional development (CPD) and to raise local awareness of the benefits and safe use of aromatherapy and essential oils.

- f) Please note when a learner qualifies and upgrades to postgraduate membership the certificate and badge will be sent second class to the learner's personal address as recorded on file not the Centre, regardless if the Centres pay this fee for their learners.
- g) The Centre may request that an IFA representative presents the IFA Qualification to learners but will be required to pay the IFA representative's fee and travel and accommodation expenses where applicable for this service.

#### **46. IFA QUALIFICATION(S)**

- a) The IFA examination certificates provide learners with a transcript of study, showing the grade for each module of an IFA Qualification.
- b) Centres should respond to enquiries and requests for information from learners' potential employers or reference agents regarding what they have been taught, if requested.
- c) The IFA currently regulates qualification providers and aromatherapists operating in 42 countries and the IFA qualifications are well known and recognised for high standards of training. Centres, however should advise learners to contact the visa branch of the embassy of the country where they wish to operate, in order to

establish the criteria required to work in their chosen country as this varies from country to country.

#### **47. REISSUING EXAMINATION CERTIFICATES**

- a) The Centre is not permitted to make copies of an original IFA certificate to duplicate or re-issue. If a learner or the Centre loses or damages a certificate, the Centre must complete the Replacement Order Form and pay the relevant administration charge, as per the Service Fee Policy.
- b) Qualification certificates are issued for each learner with the name as written on the Student Registration Form. If the information provided on the Student Registration Form is incorrect, a fee will be charged to reissue as per the Service Fee Policy. If the error has been made by the IFA, the certificate will be reissued expediently without charge.
- c) Before any certificate is reissued the Centre must return the original certificate or provide evidence that it has been destroyed e.g. provide a picture of it torn up.
- d) The Centre will take all reasonable steps to ensure fraudulent or mistaken requests for examination certificates are not made.
- e) Please note where a request for a name change is made and the change is significant, the IFA will require additional information to verify identification.

#### **48. EXAMINATION FEEDBACK**

- a) The Centre will be provided with the practical and theory overview report to inform the Centre's internal review.
- b) The IFA will not enter into discussion or correspondence on the subject of individual learner's examination results.
- c) Any learner who wishes to appeal their result will be referred to the IFA Appeals Policy available on the IFA's website. All appeals must be supported by the Centre.

#### **49. RESUBMITTING COURSEWORK**

- a) Where treatment evidence, case studies and assignments are verified by the Principal Teacher, but the IFA Quality Assurance Assessor concludes that they do not meet the required standard, the Centre will be sent a referral report for the learner which will indicate the additional work which must be completed in order to pass.
- b) The learner will have up to eight (8) weeks to complete the additional work and submit to the IFA with the reassessment fee as per the Service Fee Policy.
- c) The IFA will organise for an IFA Quality Assurance Assessor to attend the IFA Head Office to verify the additional work, which may take up to eight (8) weeks. We

recommend that learners resubmit their coursework as soon as possible, as certificates will not be released until verified.

#### **50. EXAMINATION FAILURE**

If a learner fails an examination, they will be required to re-sit the examination they have failed.

#### **51. RESITTING EXAMINATIONS**

- a) Re-sits must be taken within one (1) year of the original examination.
- b) If the learner cannot re-sit the examination in the one (1) year time frame, for example due to a medical reason, the Centre will complete the Special Considerations Form found in the Centre Support Area.
- c) A learner may re-sit an IFA examination a maximum of three (3) times. If the learner has not improved the grade after the third resit, the learner must retake the course and reapply for examination after the respective period.
- d) Centres will highlight on the examination candidate list which learner(s) are re-sitting the examination.
- e) Centres are reminded to leave an appropriate amount of time for further study before re-entering a learner into examinations.
- f) Re-sits will take place at the Centre's next convened examination date or alternatively the learner may transfer to another Centre in accordance with the Transfer Policy available on the IFA's website.

#### **52. APPEALING AGAINST EXAMINATION RESULTS**

- a) The Centre may appeal an examination result on behalf of a learner as per the IFA's Appeals Policy, available on the IFA website.
- b) The Centre must ensure that the learner is eligible to appeal as per the IFA's Appeals Policy before submitting an appeal to the IFA.
- c) The IFA will review all appeals as set out in its Appeals Policy.

#### **53. LEARNER WITHDRAWAL**

- a) The IFA will maintain a log of all learners registered at the Centre.
- b) Centres will inform the IFA if a learner withdraws from an IFA Qualification(s) and the reasons to inform our internal review.

- c) On withdrawal, the student's membership will be terminated as of the date the learner withdrew.
- d) The student membership fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.

#### **54. CENTRE WITHDRAWAL**

- a) If a Centre wishes to withdraw from offering IFA Qualifications(s) or does not wish to renew their approved status, the Centre will inform the IFA by giving one (1) months' notice in writing. Withdrawal of Qualifications will follow the procedure as outlined in the Sanctions policy.
- b) Voluntary withdrawal does not constitute a sanction but the same procedure applies for any and all reasons for withdrawal of approval.

#### **55. COMPLAINTS RAISED AGAINST A CENTRE**

- a) Please see the IFA's Complaints Policy, which describes the procedure that the IFA will follow if a complaint is raised against a Centre.
- b) The complaints procedure sets out the types of evidence required and what complaints we can and cannot consider. These steps are taken before the complaint is referred to the formal Malpractice and Maladministration Policy. This reduces the likelihood of frivolous, vexatious or malicious complaints.

#### **56. SANCTIONS**

If a Centre fails to comply with the Approval Criteria, Centre Agreement or this Centre Handbook and any other policy and procedures that relate to them, sanctions will be applied to the Centre as per the IFA's Sanctions Policy, which may result in approval being withdrawn.

#### **57. APPEALS PROCEDURE**

- a) The Centre may appeal a decision made by the IFA as per the IFA's Appeals Policy.
- b) Appeals must be lodged within 30 days of the decision being made.
- c) Appeals can only be made if the Centre is able to demonstrate that the IFA has not applied its rules consistently, properly or fairly, not simply because they are unhappy with the decision.

## **58. REFRESHER COURSES**

- a) If an IFA Qualified Aromatherapist has not been professionally practising for three (3) years or more and is returning to the profession after a career break, the IFA recommends that they undertake a refresher course at an IFA Approved Centre.
- b) Centres who wish to provide this service may elect to provide a generic refresher course or tailor a short course accordingly. Dependent on the time elapsed and the individual's circumstances, refresher courses can be integrated or incorporated into the main aromatherapy teaching and learning programme e.g. attendance of certain aspects of the course and/or can also include workshops and seminars.
- c) The applying therapist will complete a short questionnaire provided by the IFA office, which will be supplied to the Centre with answers to assist the Centre to identify areas that need refreshing.
- d) It is anticipated that refresher courses will assist in the supervision of practitioners and increase CPD course attendance at Centres.
- e) The Centre may or may not choose to offer a refresher course but those who do will be promoted on the IFA website at no additional charge for offering this service.
- f) The Centre will retain all records relating to refresher training, for a minimum of two years and issue the therapist with a CPD certificate on completion.

## **59. UPGRADING APPLICANTS WITH A PRE-EXISTING QUALIFICATION**

- a) Aromatherapists with a pre-existing qualification who wish to upgrade their knowledge and/or apply for full membership will be referred to an IFA Approved Centre.
- b) The applying therapist will complete the Accredited Prior Learning Mapping Questionnaire, which breaks down the subject content of each module and unit incorporated within the IFA Diploma course to compare against their prior learning.
- c) The learner will provide the completed questionnaire and supplementary evidence to the Centre to assist the Centre to identify areas that need further development before entering the learner into the IFA externally invigilated examinations.
- d) The Centre will measure the applicant's prior learning as per the IFA's Recognition and Prior Learning and Exemption Policy. The procedure specified under the 'upgrade your qualifications page' can be found on the IFA's website.
- e) It is anticipated that upgrade courses will encourage more learners to enrol on an IFA course and make IFA Qualification(s) more accessible.
- f) The Centre may or may not choose to offer an upgrade course but those who do, will be promoted on the IFA website at no additional charge for offering this service.

## **60. CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) COURSES**

- a) Approved Centres are eligible to have their CPD courses promoted free of charge on the IFA's website.
- b) CPD courses must strictly relate to complementary therapy - restrictions may apply.
- c) To apply please complete the IFA Centre CPD Form found in the IFA Centre Support Area.

## **61. LOST POST**

- a) In the event that post goes missing, the Centre must inform the IFA no later than thirty (30) days from the date the fee is deducted for student membership or thirty (30) days from the date the Centre receives the examination results cover sheet by email for examination certificates. This time scale is necessary and must be complied with to enable the IFA to claim for compensation from the Royal Mail.
- b) If the IFA is informed after the thirty (30) days, the Centre will be liable for the fees to reissue plus the postage to resend.
- c) Please note it usually takes between 2-3 weeks for post to be delivered outside of the UK. Centres **must not** contact the IFA regarding lost mail until at least fourteen (14) days have passed from the date the student membership fee was deducted/examination result received by email if residing outside of the UK. Centres within the UK should contact us within ten (10) days of non-receipt.
- d) The IFA will not take responsibility for lost mail, which is outside of the IFA's control.

## **62. DAMAGED POST**

All examination certificates are distributed in a padded envelope to protect from damage. If mail does arrive damaged, the Centre must inform the IFA within the thirty (30) day timescale, which also applies to lost post, and provide pictures of how it arrived in order for the IFA to make a claim for compensation.

## **63. REISSUING**

- a) If the Centre does not receive either an examination certificate or learner confirmation letter and student ID card and this has either:
  - i. Not been returned to the IFA
  - ii. Sent to an incorrect address due to inaccurate, incomplete or outdated details provided by the Centre
  - iii. Or the Centre has not notified the IFA within the thirty (30) day time scale to reclaim from the Royal Mail

The Centre will be required to cover the costs to reissue and repost the missing items.

- b) The costs related to reissuing are as follows:
  - i. Examination Certificate £20.00 per learner
  - ii. Student Confirmation & ID Card £20.00 per learner
  - iii. Plus postage, as per the IFA's Service Fee Policy
  
- c) Postal price charges are based on the Royal Mails current pricing structure, which can be found here:  
  
<https://www.royalmail.com/sites/default/files/Our-prices-2018-effective-26-March-2018-46305575.pdf>
  
- d) To make the payment for reissuing fees, you will need to login to the Centres area of the IFA's website and visit the replacement order section of the IFA shop.
  
- e) If post is not delivered due to a clerical error by the IFA, it will be reissued expediently without charge.

#### **64. CENTRE SUPPORT AREA**

- a) Once approved, the Centre can access the Centre Support Area by signing into the IFA's website.
  
- b) Centres' individual sign in details will be provided on the Centre's confirmation letter.
  
- c) The Centre Support Area contains all the sample templates, learner assignments forms, briefs and forms to complete throughout delivery of Qualification(s) to assist Centres in meeting their obligations.
  
- d) It is Centres' responsibility to ensure all their staff are informed of how to access the Centre Support Area to reduce the number of enquiries.

#### **65. SERVICE FEES**

All service fees, including late payment penalties and reissuing fees applied throughout Qualification(s) delivery are available on the IFA website, see [Service Fees Policy](#).

## **66. ACCOUNTS & INVOICES**

- a) The Centre will pay all invoices issued by the within 30 days of receipt or such other date as may be stipulated by the IFA.
- b) All invoices raised by the IFA will be the only proof of confirmation provided by the IFA for accounting purposes.

## **67. RENEWAL OF APPROVAL**

- a) The Centre will be sent a reminder 30 days before their renewal is due.
- b) Payment must be made in full by the due date.
- c) Late payments fees will be applied if the Centre does not meet the due date as per the Service Fee Policy.
- d) Before the renewal payment is made the Centre must have submitted the Annual Declaration of Interest Form.

## **68. CUSTOMER SERVICE**

- a) The IFA will aim to answer any reasonable enquiries received from Centres within five (5) working days.
- b) We ask that Centres refrain from sending follow-up emails. All emails are answered in chronological order.
- c) Please note the Centre will be expected to have read this handbook and exhausted the Centre Support Area before contacting the IFA. These information sources have been carefully constructed to provide additional guidance and provide answers to the majority of questions that Centres may have.
- d) If a Centre would like to complain about the customer service received it should refer to the IFA's Complaints Policy.

## **69. COMMUNICATIONS**

- a) The IFA expect a Centre's staff to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, including being courteous and respectful towards learners, the general public, other professionals, and Approved Centres.
- b) All Centre staff must be polite and respectful in all communications with the IFA's staff.

## **70. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

The IFA recognises the importance of meeting Centres' expectations of a high standard of service delivery but not at the cost of the abuse of its services or the mistreatment of its staff. Unacceptable behaviour is defined as behaviour which is aggressive, vexatious, and persistent or any form of abusive behaviour. It also includes persistent unreasonable demands. Behaviour is not viewed as unacceptable just because a person is forceful or persistent. However, the actions of a person who is angry, demanding or persistent may result in unreasonable demands or behaviour towards employees, which in turn would be deemed as unacceptable. The individual's action may also be considered unreasonably persistent if all internal review mechanisms have been exhausted and the individual continues to challenge the decision relating to their complaint or dispute.

### **Aggressive Behaviour**

This is behaviour which is deemed violent and may result in physical harm. It also includes behaviour or language (written or oral) that threatens aggressive acts.

### **Abusive Behaviour Physical**

This includes physical violence and harassment as well as angry physical gestures.

### **Verbal**

This includes rudeness, derogatory remarks about staff or the organisation, inflammatory statements and unsubstantiated allegations. This also includes personal attacks on a staff member's ability or character and subjective conjecture about conduct.

### **Intimidation / Threatening Behaviour**

This is behaviour that causes staff to feel afraid and/or threatened. This includes persistent invasion of personal space and threatening language (written or oral). This also includes inappropriate behaviour where members appear to be crossing professional boundaries.

### **Vexatious Behaviour**

This is behaviour which is disproportionate to the matter in discussion. It includes behaviour which appears to be without sufficient grounds, purely to cause annoyance or to misdirect or waste IFA resources.

### **Persistent Behaviour**

This is behaviour where despite reasonable attempts to resolve a matter, the individual continues to make high levels of communication and will not accept that the IFA cannot provide them with a level of service other than that which has been provided already. Examples include refusing to accept a decision made by IFA, refusing to accept explanations relating to what options are feasible and pursuing a case without presenting any new significant information. The IFA considers this behaviour unacceptable when it is taking up a disproportionate amount of time and resource.

### **Unreasonable demands**

This is where members make what is considered to be unreasonable demands on the IFA through the amount of information they request or send to the organisation, including what the IFA deems to be to an unacceptable number of recipients. It includes unreasonable demands regarding the nature and scale of the service they expect, and who they expect to respond to demands. Examples of this may include demanding unreasonable timescales, insisting on speaking to particular members of staff only, emailing a large number of recipients in the IFA regarding the same matter or persistently demanding disciplinary action against members of staff or contacting multiple members of staff regarding the same issue.

If an individual does act aggressively, abusively or excessively this will be deemed a breach of the Service User Policy and individuals will be warned to discontinue their current behaviour and 'cease and desist'. They will also be informed that this will be logged on the Centre's record to inform other or future staff of their aggressive/abusive conduct. Failure to change behaviour, will result in the IFA applying sanctions to the Centre.

### **71. FEEDBACK**

The IFA is always looking for new ways in which to assist our Centres and feedback is valuable to us. If the Centre would like to make any suggestions of how we can improve our services please complete the feedback form in the Centre Support Area.

### **72. MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT**

To support our overseas Centres the IFA has multilingual staff and has a multilingual website, currently available in Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese and English.