	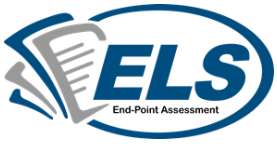	
ISSUED BY: Director of EPA Caroline Walton	**End-Point Assessment** **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**	**ISSUE DATE:** September 2024 **REVIEW DATE:** September 2025
	EPA Sanctions Policy	**ISSUE:** V5

Definitions

Sanction: *a potential penalty given as a result of failing to comply with ELS EPA rules and guidelines.*

Adverse effect: *an effect that goes against EPA desired conditions.*

Scope and Purpose

Explosive Learning Solutions (ELS) will take all reasonable steps to prevent any adverse effects which could impact on the assessment outcomes for apprentices and lead to one individual or cohort being unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged in their End-Point Assessment (EPA). Where ELS identifies any practices which could result in an adverse effect, sanctions will be applied consistently and proportionately to the parties involved.

This policy applies to all stakeholders and third parties involved in the EPA process and includes apprentices, their employers, training providers and their representatives and third-party suppliers. It applies particularly to areas where ELS relies on self-regulation by the stakeholders.

Sanctions are most commonly issued following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration. They may also be imposed where the offender has failed to complete a task that ELS has requested they do.

The sanction enforced will reflect the seriousness of the incident. When deciding the appropriate sanction(s), ELS will consider factors such as the actual or potential risk to the integrity of the EPA.

Procedure

ELS will apply a range of appropriate and proportionate sanctions in response to events such as:

- Training providers failing to meet gateway requirements fully
- Inappropriate support or assistance to apprentices that unfairly helps them to pass an EPA component
- Failing to prepare apprentices fully for their EPA (understanding of methods/components)
- Knowingly and repeatedly moving apprentices from the on-programme phase to EPA who are not likely to be successful resulting in resits and retakes
- Not advising ELS of apprentices who require reasonable adjustments for timely support to be provided
- Failing to disclose any actual or perceived individual or organisational conflict of interest
- Non-payment of EPA fees
- Inaccurate or out of date information shared (such as dates of breaks in learning, changes of address/workplace)

Please note this list is not exhaustive**.**

Possible Sanctions

In the event that ELS identifies such practices, it will consistently impose sanctions to protect the apprentice and the validity, reliability and security of the EPA.

The following sanctions may be imposed:

- Issue a verbal warning with a notice to improve as discussed in monthly partner meetings.
- Pausing EPA until internal investigation is conducted and concluded.
- Pausing EPA until outstanding payments are received.
- Report concerns to the regulator/EQAP where it is felt the adverse effect could impact on the reliability of the assessment outcome or on another EPAO.

- Decline of new registrations for EPA until agreed actions have been completed in a specified timeframe
- Early closure of the partner agreement

After investigation of a breach, if ELS advise that a sanction needs to be imposed, we will notify the training provider via email explaining the type of sanction that is going to be applied and the reasons why. This will be followed up in a letter, providing written confirmation posted to the training provider.

The training provider and apprentice are required to comply with the terms of any sanctions imposed within the relevant time scales. Any actions must be completed. If you do not comply then further sanctions could be imposed which could be more serious than the original sanction.

Once an investigation has been completed and the sanction imposed, ELS will review the situation on a step-by-step basis to amend or remove the sanction depending on the outcome of the review process. You will be notified of the outcome by email.

Reporting

Any sanctions will be reported to the ELS EPA Board of Governors quarterly. This policy is reviewed annually and will be shared with all stakeholders.

Appeals

To appeal against a sanction, you should submit an appeal form within 10 working days of the sanction being issued. The form should detail why you believe an appeal should be considered and should be submitted along with any supporting evidence. Appeals Forms can be found on the ELS website and on ACE360. Please see the ELS EPA Appeals Policy for further details on the appeals procedure.

Please email or post your completed Appeals Form and any supporting evidence to us using the contact/address details provided in this policy.

The ELS Quality Assurance Manager will consider how appropriate the original sanction was in light of the evidence presented. They will respond to the complainant with feedback and a decision on whether or not the sanction will remain enforced or be revoked within 10 working days of receiving the appeal notification. If the complainant is still unhappy with the decision made, they will progress to stage 2 of the ELS EPA Appeals process, and the incident will be reviewed collectively by the Appeals Panel.

Contacts

To report a breach of ELS EPA policy, contact ELS via the following:

Email: epaenquiries@explosivelearningsolutions.com

Telephone: 01235861805

Address:

4 The Terraces, Library Avenue

Harwell Science and Innovation Campus

Didcot, Oxfordshire

OX11 OSG