

ABRSM

ABRSM CME related policies and processes

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Contents

Overview.....	2
Certification.....	2
Complaints and appeals	2
Malpractice and maladministration	3
Policy and procedures for the investigation of suspected or alleged malpractice.....	3
Data Protection.....	4
E-Portfolio.....	4
Moderation and retention of work.....	5
Parental consent and professional values.....	5
Collection of Personal Data	5
Safeguarding.....	5

Overview

Centres will be expected to abide by ABRSM's policies covering the items below, and should be aware of the processes and requirements:

- Complaints and appeals
- Malpractice and maladministration
- Data protection
- Safeguarding

In addition to our own rigorous Quality Assurance policies, Ofqual also monitor the quality of the awards present on its databank, and feedback as appropriate. Rationales behind the rules of combination and the qualification itself will also be reviewed, in order to ensure that they remain an accurate representation of the qualification. This will be done through a qualifications monitoring board, in collaboration with other awarding organisations, for the CME qualification.

Certification

After going through quality checks by ABRSM staff, certificates are sent together with any additional paperwork to the centre, for distribution to learners. Our certificates have been designed to include various security features to prevent copying or forgery. These include:

- Hologram – our logo in hologram stamped onto a printed grey tint box
- Watermark
- Gold foil
- Modified fonts
- Background of certificate contains a numismatic-style design of the crest. Especially designed and incorporating colour not available on laser printers.
- Paper used by ABRSM has enhanced toner adhesion and a frangible surface (this breaks apart, destroying the paper, when tampered with) to prevent alteration or forgery.

Our certificates meet the design specifications outlined by Ofqual for accredited qualifications and include the appropriate credit value and level.

Complaints and appeals

As part of the application process for approval, a centre will need to provide a detailed description of the complaints and appeals procedure they intend to, or already have, in place. As centres will be working with learners directly, it is the centre's responsibility to make sure a fair and appropriate policy is in place to deal with complaints and appeals from their learners or staff. This should include processes to deal with complaints against Internal Assessors, and complaints related to the venue or facilities.

Appeals against results issued by the centre's Internal Assessors should be made directly to the centre. There are processes set up to ensure the quality of assessors within each centre, to avoid appeals where possible. As the awarding organisation for the qualification, ABRSM has quality

assurance processes in place, including moderation of results before certification, to ensure fairness and consistency of marking.

For complaints and appeals against ABRSM as an awarding organisation for the qualification, or against ABRSM staff involved in the process of CME qualification management and co-ordination, a letter of complaint needs to be addressed to the Teacher Support team, ABRSM, 24 Portland Place, London, W1B 1LU, detailing the complaint being raised.

Malpractice and maladministration

Policy and procedures for the investigation of suspected or alleged malpractice

ABRSM's priority is to maintain the integrity of our qualifications and assessments. Any allegations made against ABRSM staff involving the falsification of ABRSM qualifications and assessments (or assisting learners with malpractice) will be considered as potential gross misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the ABRSM Disciplinary and Dismissal policy.

Where marks, mark forms and/or certificates appear to have been falsified, ABRSM will:

1. Check computer records to ascertain the correct result(s).
2. Write to the person sending the documentation or making the claim of malpractice. Confirm that ABRSM takes very seriously any possibility of qualification or assessment results being misrepresented, and will investigate as a matter of urgency. It is important that no allegations or judgements about who may be responsible are made at this stage.
3. Confirm the true mark(s), if the person enquiring is a learner, a centre or a centre representative.
4. Pass all information to the relevant Quality Assurance Manager within the Chief Examiner's department who will write to the learner, centre or representative as follows:
 - Stating the facts that are known
 - State the importance of the integrity of ABRSM certificates and results
 - Asking for any information, as a matter of urgency, that would help with the investigation
 - Giving a date by which a reply is required
 - Confirming that during the investigation, it will not be possible to accept further assessment or qualification entries from the centre involved, although any existing entries will be honoured).

If the investigation concludes that the centre is not guilty of malpractice:

Written confirmation of this will be sent to the centre and any ABRSM registration will be reinstated immediately.

If the centre denies involvement and there is no clear evidence of malpractice:

Written notice of the outcome of the investigation will be sent to the centre and ABRSM registration will be reinstated.

If the centre admits malpractice:

The Chief Examiner will review the full details of the case in consultation with the Chief Executive, in order to decide what action is appropriate. Written notice of the decision will be sent to the centre.

Consideration will be given to the gravity and scope of the incident(s), and possible outcomes include:

- Permanently suspending the centre's ABRSM registration and notifying the centre that we will no longer accept entries for our assessments or other services, either from the centre or from anyone acting on its behalf.
- Permanently suspending the centre's ABRSM registration and notifying the centre that we will no longer accept entries for our assessments or other services from them. However, learners may be entered for assessments by another centre.
- Reinstating the centre's ABRSM registration but requiring them to supply the names and addresses of any future learners, so that ABRSM may make checks to verify the accuracy of assessment results.
- Reinstating the Centre's ABRSM registration but requiring a written undertaking that there will be no further recurrences.

If the Centre does not respond or denies involvement but there is clear evidence:

The Chief Examiner will review the full details of the case in consultation with the Chief Executive, in order to decide what action is appropriate. Written notice of the decision will be sent to the centre. Consideration will be given to the gravity and scope of the incident(s) and possible outcomes include:

- Permanently suspending the centre's ABRSM registration and notifying them that we will no longer accept entries for our assessments or other services from them. However, learners may be entered for assessments by another centre.
- Further action involving legal advice and/or the police

The decision may be reviewed after a period of three months if the centre provides additional information to explain how the alleged malpractice occurred.

If learners have been disadvantaged by malpractice on the part of their centre, ABRSM will:

- Advise learners about the outcome of the investigation.
- Offer advice on finding a new centre.
- Offer free assessment entry or re-entry, if appropriate.

In all cases where there is evidence that malpractice has occurred ABRSM will:

Notify Ofqual by email to: eventnotification@ofqual.gov.uk

Notify Trinity College London by email to: qualificationsandstandards@trinitycollege.co.uk

Data Protection

The following information on Data Protection refers specifically to data surrounding the Certificate for Music Educators (CME) qualification.

E-Portfolio

Learners working towards the CME qualification will have access to our dedicated e-Portfolio system for uploading work for assessment purposes. Work submitted to this e-Portfolio system is only for use by learners enrolled on courses leading to the CME qualification, Internal Assessors, and Moderators employed by ABRSM. It is not to be shared, redistributed or used for any purpose other

than for the CME qualification. Work is stored in a secure environment, is encrypted and has, restricted, password protected, access.

Moderation and retention of work

Moderation is the process for ensuring the consistency of marking standards applied by the Internal Assessor. An appointed moderator will view a selection of the submitted work, and either confirm or adjust the assessment. ABRSM moderators are experienced education professionals and have DBS checks before being offered work. After moderation, any work submitted for assessment will be held for a period of three months, and will then be removed from the e-Portfolio system. Some materials may be archived for training purposes, in line with ABRSM's internal quality-assurance procedures, and as part of processes required by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Parental consent and professional values

ABRSM is keen to ensure that the purposes and use of any video recordings associated with the CME showing children and young people are clearly understood by parents/carers when giving their consent to their children being filmed. As part of the assessment process, all participants are encouraged to follow best practice, not only in relation to gaining parental consent, but also in the centre's explanation of subsequent use of any video material.

Collection of Personal Data

It is necessary for learners to supply their personal data and to provide all the information requested in application documents, where applicable, in order for a centre to process and consider their applications.

The personal data provided will be used for processing applications for course admission, academic and administrative communication, alumni management and contacts, research, statistical and marketing (including direct marketing) purposes. The data will be handled initially by the Centre but will also be transferred to ABRSM for these purposes.

Learners can opt out of receiving communications for marketing purposes, and this option should be clearly indicated on all application forms that centres manage.

Safeguarding

Details of the current ABRSM safeguarding policy can be found at:

abrs.org/more-information/policies/safeguarding