

[News story: Supporting Exams Officers](#)



Running exams is a tough job and one that requires all-year-round effort as well as particular challenges during the exam season. Ofqual recognises this and has been in discussions with exams officers to find ways we can help them run a smooth, incident-free series.

Working with exams officers, we created a film about the role of the Exams Officer to raise awareness of the important work they do among other school staff and parents.

[Ofqual Explores: The Exams Officer](#)

We held a webinar for Exams Officers on Tuesday 13 November 2018, the recording of which you can watch below. A transcript and the PowerPoint slides are also available below.

[When things go right: A wider perspective of the exams system](#)

Please note the poll results at 29.15 are incorrect, as respondents were only able to click on one option. Please refer to the re-run of the same poll 54 minutes into the webinar, when this error was corrected.

MS Powerpoint Presentation, 2.92MB

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email publications@ofqual.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

PDF, 97.1KB, 3 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email publications@ofqual.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

PDF, 147KB, 3 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email publications@ofqual.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

PDF, 85.5KB, 1 page

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. [Request an accessible format.](#)

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email publications@ofqual.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

Summer exams are an all-year-round effort

For many school and college staff, when exam halls are packed up and the 'silence' signs disappear, they may be tempted to ask an Exams Officer what they do for the rest of the year. Marcia Woods, Exams Officer at Brookfield Community School in Chesterfield, explains in a [guest blog post here](#).

We have looked at the reasons students might bring their mobile phones into the exam hall, and they might not be what you think. Check our [our blog post looking behind the malpractice statistics](#).

Published 20 September 2018

Last updated 28 March 2019 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 28 March 2019 Included the details of the new film, Ofqual Explores: The Exams Officer
2. 28 March 2019 Added student exam checklist and a link to a blogpost on malpractice statistics.

3. 10 December 2018 Added responses to questions put to Ofqual during the webinar, and centre practices to help keep mobile phones out of the exam room.
 4. 19 November 2018 Webinar recording added
 5. 20 September 2018 First published.
-

[Press release: One person quits smoking every 80 seconds in England](#)

Last year, nearly 400,000 smokers in England quit successfully, which is the equivalent to 1,069 smokers each day. Despite new smokers starting and ex-smokers relapsing, there are now 1 million fewer smokers in England since 2014.

Of the 6.1 million smokers in England, 6 in 10 want to quit but most try to quit using willpower alone (or 'cold turkey') despite this being the least effective method. The most successful quit attempts use a combination of effective stop smoking support methods.

The best way to quit is with expert help from local stop smoking services together with stop smoking aids. In 2017 to 2018, half (51%) of smokers who got this package of support managed to quit and among those who used an e-cigarette in their quit attempt, the success rate was up to 63%.

New to this year, Public Health England's Stoptober campaign is offering a free online 'Personal Quit Plan' to help smokers find the right stop smoking support for them. The online plan asks a number of questions and provides smokers with a suggested combination of support based on their level of tobacco dependency and what quitting support they have used previously.

Smokers will be advised that nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products are most effective when used in combination – an all-day patch together with a fast-acting option such as an inhaler or lozenges to help them deal with any immediate cravings.

Dr. Jenny Harries, Deputy Medical Director at Public Health England, said:

There are many different types of stop smoking support available, so it can be difficult for a smoker to know what will work best for them. The important thing is not to be put off trying to quit even if you have not managed to in the past.

This year, Stoptober can help you find a combination that could work for you. We predict that thousands of smokers will quit every day over the next 10 years – I urge smokers not to get left behind

for the benefit of their health. Join in, find your best way to quit and start your 28-day journey to becoming smokefree.

Steve Brine, Public Health Minister said:

Millions of people are living healthier lives as a result of our efforts to reduce smoking rates. Britain is a global leader on tobacco control and our robust policies mean smoking rates have fallen to record lows. But we are not complacent – we know we must do all we can to keep encouraging smokers to quit for good.

Quitting altogether is the single best thing a smoker can do for their health – Stoptober is a brilliant chance to go smoke-free for 28 days and see the benefits for yourself.

Dr Sarah Jarvis, GP and TV doctor said:

I see many people in my surgery who want to quit smoking but far too many try without support, and they end up going back to smoking after a short period. Stop smoking aids and face-to-face support from local stop smoking services are proven methods of support that help many thousands of people to quit each year.

The Personal Quit Plan is a quick and useful free tool for smokers looking to quit. People just answer a few questions about their smoking and they are then recommended a combination of support to increase their chances of quitting this Stoptober.

Jeremy Kyle, TV presenter and until recently a smoker of 35 years, said:

I was a 20 a day smoker for most of my life and am proud to say I quit smoking earlier this year. I've tried many times in the past to quit but nothing really worked for me. This year, however, the time was right and I wanted to do it for me. With the death of my mother, having cancer myself and becoming a grandad this year, I was determined and I'm so happy I'm now smokefree. I'm not going to pretend it is easy, but I knew my time smoking was up.

The thing that is really helping me stay smokefree is vaping. I'm currently on the lowest nicotine strength and will then come off the e-cigarette altogether when the time is right for me. Since quitting I've learned just how important using support is and for people not to go 'cold turkey' – that certainly didn't work for me in the past. If I can quit, I honestly believe anyone can quit if you just have the right support, and that's what Stoptober is there to give you and I want people to know that and to do it this year.

Stoptober is based on research that if you can make it to 28 days smokefree, you are five times more likely to quit for good. The new Personal Quit Plan will recommend a range of options to smokers including face-to-face support, nicotine replacement therapies like patches, gum or inhalers, and e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes remain the nation's favourite stop smoking aid, with an estimated 3.2 million adult users in Great Britain. Over time, the proportion who are ex-smokers has risen and over half (52%) of current vapers have stopped smoking completely. A further 900,000 people have given up both smoking and vaping.

Search 'Stoptober' to use the Personal Quit Plan and to find out about the range of free and proven support available to help you start your quitting journey on 1 October.

1. In 2017 there were 6.1 million smokers and 6.4% of those quit successfully last year (390,400).
2. Total quits in 2017: $390,400 / 365 = 1,069$ per day; $1,069 / 24 = 44$ per hour; $60 \text{ mins} / 44 \text{ per hour} = 1$ every 1.36 mins or 81 secs. Source: [Smoking in England: Smoking Toolkit Study – Stopped smoking in the past 12 months, University College London.](#)

[News story: Government announces 'root and branch' review of rail](#)

- former British Airways chief executive Keith Williams to lead major review of rail industry, supported by an expert challenge panel
- review to look at the structure of the whole rail industry, including increasing integration between track and train, regional partnerships and improving value for money for passengers and taxpayers
- plans for reform to be implemented from 2020

A sweeping review to transform Britain's railways has been launched today (20 September 2018) by Transport Secretary Chris Grayling.

The review – the most significant since privatisation – will consider ambitious recommendations for reform to ensure our vital rail system continues to benefit passengers and support a stronger, fairer economy.

The review – led by independent chair Keith Williams, the former British Airways chief executive and deputy chairman of John Lewis Partnership – will build on the government's franchising strategy – bringing track and train closer together to reduce disruption and improve accountability, and considering regional partnerships and how we can use innovation to improve services and value for money for passengers.

Keith Williams will be supported by an external panel and will report next year. The government will publish a white paper on the review's recommendations, with the implementation of reforms planned to start from 2020.

The panel will consider all parts of the rail industry, from the current franchising system and industry structures, accountability, and value for money for passengers and taxpayers.

The panel membership will include Roger Marsh, who chairs the body representing the 11 local enterprise partnerships in the north of England and will bring his expert knowledge and experience of business and transport needs across the north of the country.

Privatisation has led to a level of growth never seen under nationalisation, and reversed the decline the railways saw under British Rail, where routes and stations were closing.

Passenger journeys have more than doubled -- from 735 million in 1994-5 to 1.73 billion in 2016-17. Private investment is at record levels, totalling £5.6 billion over the past 10 years, and the rail network has one of the highest rates of satisfaction and safety in Europe.

However, the industry has not kept pace with this significant growth, shown as the industry struggled to deliver for passengers following the May timetable disruption.

The government has already taken steps to strengthen future train franchises and improve reliability. However, we want to ensure the rail system continues to deliver benefits in the face of these challenges.

The review will analyse all aspects of the industry, alongside the country's changing travel and work patterns. It will make recommendations to improve the current franchising model in terms of reliability, delivering better services and value for money for passengers, commercial sustainability and innovation.

The review has been launched ahead of the interim report by Professor Stephen Glaister into the [timetabling issues in May](#). It will take into account the findings of his final report at the end of the year.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Privatisation has delivered huge benefits of passengers on Britain's railways – doubling passenger journeys and bringing in billions of private investment.

But it is clear that the structure we inherited is no longer fit to meet today's challenges and cope with increasing customer demand. Following the disruption this summer we took immediate action to improve services and ensure the industry compensated passengers.

We've been clear that the railway needs reform to prioritise its passengers, and we have set out plans for closer partnerships between operators of track and train, including on the LNER and South Eastern networks.

But as part of our vision for the future of mobility, we need to go further and more quickly, to get the best from the public and private sectors and deliver the railway we need for the 21st century. It is vital that this review leaves no stone unturned and makes bold recommendations for the future.

I am delighted that Keith Williams – who has significant experience leading businesses within the transport sector – has agreed to be the independent chair of this review. His expertise in driving customer service excellence will be incredibly valuable as we seek to reform the rail industry to become more passenger focused.

The review has a wide scope and will focus on:

- leveraging the commercial model to ensure improved services for passengers and taxpayers, and more effectively balance public and private sector involvement
- the roles and structures of all parts of the industry, looking at how they can work together more effectively to reduce fragmentation, improve passenger services and increase accountability
- how the railway can support a fares system that delivers value for money for passengers and taxpayers; and improved industrial relations to maintain performance for passengers

While the review is taking place, the government will continue with its ambitious programme of investment – £48 billion over the next 5 years.

Keith Williams said:

It's clear that Britain's railway has seen unprecedented growth and is carrying more passengers than it did a century ago on a network a fraction of the size. But it also clear it faces significant challenges.

I am looking forward to working with the industry and passengers to tackle these challenges.

While the review is underway, the department will work closely with industry to ensure that rail delivers the day-to-day performance and transformational improvements that passengers expect.

The government will set out the terms of reference of the review and the membership of the panel when Parliament returns. The Transport Secretary has asked that the review engages with a wide range of stakeholders in all parts of the country, including passenger representatives, businesses, and local

and devolved bodies and governments.

The department has reviewed all ongoing franchise competitions and other live rail projects in the context of the rail review. Due to the unique geographic nature of the [Cross Country franchise](#), which runs from Aberdeen to Penzance and cuts across multiple parts of the railway, awarding this franchise in 2019 could impact on the review's conclusions.

It has therefore been decided that this competition will not proceed. Services will continue to be operated by the existing franchisee with options beyond this to be considered in due course. The department will consider the responses to the Cross Country public consultation in the development of future options for the franchise.

All other ongoing franchise competitions and other live rail projects are continuing as planned.

[News story: How to rent as a student](#)

Renting your first place in the private rented sector while at university can be a daunting task, but it needn't be with all the measures the Government has put in place to drive up standards and protect tenants.

Knowing your rights – as well as your responsibilities – ensures you'll live in a safe and comfortable environment and will be able to hold your landlord or agent to account if certain standards aren't met.

There are lots of things the Government requires landlords to do. To make understanding all this simple, we've put together a definitive guide to renting that tells you everything you need to consider, know and do.

Protecting your deposit

By law, your landlord or letting agent is required to protect your deposit in a Government-approved scheme within 30 days of taking it. These schemes ensure your money can't be misused, lost or kept from you when you're entitled to it back. There are only three:

Your landlord or agent must also provide you with all the information on the scheme they've used within 30 days. If they fail to do either of these things they lose their ability to evict you with a [section 21 notice](#).

There is a useful guide on what to do if your landlord breaks your tenancy deposit protection scheme rules available from [Shelter](#).

Houses in multiple occupation

The rules around [houses in multiple occupation \(HMO\)](#) will be changing on 1 October 2018. Among other things, the new rules set out a minimum bedroom size; no less than 6.51 square metres for a single adult.

They also make it mandatory for landlords to adhere to council refuse schemes and ensure their properties have adequate waste facilities.

Councils may give landlords up to 18 months to make changes to ensure their HMOs comply with the bedroom size rules, but if you've just taken out a two-year tenancy you should consider now how these rules will affect your property in the future.

If something goes wrong

It is your landlord or agent's responsibility to ensure the property is kept up to standard. This includes arranging prompt and certifiable repairs when utilities like gas, water and electricity fail, repairing or replacing faulty appliances, and maintaining the condition of the property.

All letting agents and property managers in England must belong to a Government approved redress scheme. There are only two:

These schemes provide help in resolving disputes between landlords, agents and tenants, and are a safeguard for when you're unable to resolve a dispute yourself.

More information

More detailed information on everything contained in this article is available in our [How To Rent guide](#) – which your landlord must provide you with at the beginning of your tenancy – and our [How To Rent a Safe Home guide](#).

Share this information

Savvy students know their rights. Share this article on social media and use the below image to tell other students you know your rights when it comes to renting.

Share this image on social media and include a link to this article

If you're a university or student union, download our helpful poster and display around campus.

[News story: How to rent as a student](#)

Renting your first place in the private rented sector while at university can be a daunting task, but it needn't be with all the measures the Government has put in place to drive up standards and protect tenants.

Knowing your rights – as well as your responsibilities – ensures you'll live in a safe and comfortable environment and will be able to hold your landlord or agent to account if certain standards aren't met.

There are lots of things the Government requires landlords to do. To make understanding all this simple, we've put together a definitive guide to renting that tells you everything you need to consider, know and do.

[Check out the 'How To Rent' guide](#)

Protecting your deposit

By law, your landlord or letting agent is required to protect your deposit in a Government-approved scheme within 30 days of taking it. These schemes ensure your money can't be misused, lost or kept from you when you're entitled to it back. There are only three:

- [The Tenancy Deposit Scheme](#)
- [The Deposit Protection Service](#)
- [mydeposits](#)

Your landlord or agent must also provide you with all the information on the scheme they've used within 30 days. If they fail to do either of these things they lose their ability to evict you with a [section 21 notice](#).

There is a useful guide on what to do if your landlord breaks your tenancy deposit protection scheme rules available from [Shelter](#).

Houses in multiple occupation

The rules around [houses in multiple occupation \(HMO\)](#) will be changing on 1 October 2018. Among other things, the new rules set out a minimum bedroom size; no less than 6.51 square metres for a single adult.

They also make it mandatory for landlords to adhere to council refuse schemes and ensure their properties have adequate waste facilities.

Councils may give landlords up to 18 months to make changes to ensure their HMOs comply with the bedroom size rules, but if you've just taken out a two-year tenancy you should consider now how these rules will affect your property in the future.

If something goes wrong

It is your landlord or agent's responsibility to ensure the property is kept up to standard. This includes arranging prompt and certifiable repairs when utilities like gas, water and electricity fail, repairing or replacing faulty appliances, and maintaining the condition of the property.

All letting agents and property managers in England must belong to a Government approved redress scheme. There are only two:

- [The Property Ombudsman](#)
- [Property Redress Scheme](#)

These schemes provide help in resolving disputes between landlords, agents and tenants, and are a safeguard for when you're unable to resolve a dispute yourself.

More information

More detailed information on everything contained in this article is available in our [How To Rent guide](#) – which your landlord must provide you with at the beginning of your tenancy – and our [How To Rent a Safe Home guide](#).

Share this information

Savvy students know their rights. Share this article on social media and use the below image to tell other students you know your rights when it comes to renting.

I know my rights when it comes to renting. Do you know yours?

Search 'how to rent as a student' on GOV.UK



HM Government

Share this image on social media and include a link to this article

If you're a university or student union, download our helpful poster and display around campus.



[How to rent as a student poster](#)

PDF, 1.63MB, 1 page