

New Ofqual 3-year plan puts students and apprentices at its heart

Ofqual's new [3-year plan](#) announced today (4 May) sets out its ambition for the future of qualifications that are sought after, fair, accessible, valued and world class. The plan details the work Ofqual will do towards this, with the interests of students and apprentices at its heart.

Ofqual has a pivotal role to play in leading, influencing and enabling innovation and transformation in assessment and qualifications. New approaches to assessment, including the use of technology, have the potential to improve quality and fairness for students and apprentices and to strengthen the resilience of how qualifications and assessments are delivered.

Ofqual will work with awarding organisations to harness greater innovation and the use of technology to promote assessments that are valid, efficient and implemented safely in the interests of students.

Ofqual will oversee the reintroduction of exam-based assessment in 2022 across general, vocational and technical qualifications where they were cancelled due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and will work to secure trust and confidence in awarding arrangements for 2022 and beyond.

Ofqual will look to the future demand for technical qualifications by working in partnership with Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education on technical qualifications, T Levels, higher technical qualifications and apprenticeship end-point assessments. The introduction of new Digital Functional Skills qualifications into the market also signals that the qualification landscape will be changing over the next decade and Ofqual will be developing and consulting on arrangements to secure high-quality qualifications as part of the government's post-16 qualifications review.

Ofqual will regulate to ensure that exams and assessments become more accessible for all students, including students with special educational needs and disabilities and students new to this country for whom English is an additional language.

Ofqual will transform how qualifications can be chosen and compared by building an interactive [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) to make the qualifications market clearer and easier to navigate.

Ofqual will make the qualifications market work better in the interests of students by promoting transparency and by helping all those that take and use qualifications to make informed choices, including on the basis of price. Regulation must support a coherent and navigable qualifications market for students, apprentices and employers.

Ofqual Chair Ian Bauckham said:

Ofqual's deep assessment expertise, access to expansive data and our convening power afford us a unique role in shaping the future of qualifications and assessment. We are ambitious in that goal. Regulation must enable good innovation that is in the interests of students and apprentices.

The pandemic has, rightly, catalysed questions about not if, but when, and how, greater use of technology and onscreen assessment should be adopted. All proposed changes need to be carefully assessed for their impact on students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. It is right that we use research and evidence to challenge existing practice so that we continue to improve what we offer for students and apprentices.

Chief Regulator Dr Jo Saxton said:

I am delighted to be publishing our 2022 to 2025 corporate plan – the first in my tenure as Chief Regulator. At its heart is my personal commitment that the interests of students and apprentices will be the compass that guides us on every decision and action. They will be our true north. I know the power of qualifications from my own personal experience and from my time working on the frontline of schools in some of the most disadvantaged areas in the country. Qualifications open doors. They are a passport to new opportunities and possibilities. To fulfil that role they must be trusted, understood, good quality and fair.

This corporate plan sets out the work that Ofqual will do to make sure that regulated qualifications are just that. I also want to make it easier for students to see a clearer choice of options. We are also looking at the future landscape of qualifications and so will be developing and consulting on arrangements to secure high-quality qualifications as part of the government's post-16 qualifications review.