

# [Fire Industry Association A0 surrenders Ofqual recognition](#)

News story

Qualifications offered by FIA A0 no longer recognised by us.



[Fire Industry Association Awarding Organisation](#) informed Ofqual on 23 October 2020 of its intention to surrender recognition for commercial reasons and, as a result, stop operating as an awarding organisation.

The surrender took effect as of 1 April 2022. From this date, no qualifications offered by Fire Industry Association Awarding Organisation are regulated by Ofqual.

Fire Industry Association Awarding Organisation previously had 6 regulated qualifications and issued 1044 certificates in the last full academic year. We understand no learners are negatively impacted by this surrender.

When awarding organisations are considering surrendering their recognition, we stand ready to discuss the options for proceeding while ensuring learners are protected.

A full list of currently recognised awarding organisations and regulated qualifications can be found on the [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#).

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[Updated qualification and top-up](#)

# training introduced for close protection sector

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) has today (1 April) introduced an updated close protection qualification for new applicants into the sector.

The updated qualification features four new units covering:

- bespoke physical intervention skills
- knowledge of door supervisor responsibilities (including protecting vulnerable people)
- legislation, threat and risk management
- personal skills, surveillance awareness, search procedures, foot drills, venue security, journey management reconnaissance and preparing and carrying out a close protection assignment

The existing units which cover the theoretical and practical aspects of working as a close protection operative have been refreshed.

The SIA also announced the introduction of top-up training for close protection operatives who apply to renew their SIA licence from 1 October 2022.

These changes, which are based on the views of expert stakeholders reflect extensive research and discussion with the industry.

The top-up training will be available from 1 July 2022. The new top-up qualification will include physical intervention skills, safety-critical content and terror threat awareness. Operatives must make sure that their first aid qualification has at least one year to run before they take the top-up training.

Throughout the SIA's engagement with the private security industry, concerns were raised that skills fade over time. The introduction of top-up training will help to ensure that all operatives have the knowledge and skills to deal with common risks, especially in safety-critical areas. The top-up requirements will only affect existing licence holders when they come to renew their licence after 1 October 2022. This means that these changes for existing licence holders will roll out over the course of the next three years.

Steve McCormick, the SIA's Director of Licensing and Standards said:

A key element of the SIA's role as the regulator is to work with the industry to protect the public and raise standards in private security. The new requirements will help to achieve this by ensuring that Close Protection operatives have the most up-to-date skills to keep themselves, their clients, and the public safe.

Rick Mounfield, Chief Executive of The Security Institute, and a member of the project board that helped direct the project also commented.

Mr Mounfield said:

The career path for close protection officers is often difficult. Contracts can be fractious, and competition is fierce. Those that professionally develop beyond the basic requirements, have always stood out from the crowd. This SIA requirement to upskill is an important evolution in the sector and those that are true professionals will welcome it. It raises the bar for all but still leaves space for enhanced professional development by choice. These enhancements are not exhaustive, but they are implemented with the collective feedback from the industry leaders and close protection officers who chose to participate in the consultation. I applaud the SIA for engaging with and listening to the experts that they regulate.

You can [read Rick Mounfield's blog](#) about what the new changes mean for close protection operatives.

You can read the SIA's '[Changes to the training you need for an SIA licence](#)' page for more details.

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the [Private Security Industry Act 2001](#). Our main duties are: the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities; and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority visit [www.gov.uk/sia](http://www.gov.uk/sia). The SIA is also on [Facebook](#) (Security Industry Authority), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#) (SIAuk).

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## [OSCE Head of Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina: UK response, 31 March 2022](#)

Thank you Chair. Welcome Ambassador Kavalec, and thank you and your team for the comprehensive report and all your work over the preceding year.

Our discussions today take place against the dark shadow of Russia's invasion

of Ukraine, which impacts on the security of all participating States in the OSCE, including in the Western Balkans.

Ambassador Kavalec, the work and added value of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be highly appreciated by the United Kingdom.

The risk of destabilisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains serious. We fully support Bosnia and Herzegovina's territorial integrity and sovereignty. We firmly support the High Representative, Christian Schmidt, EUFOR and our partners, especially your mission, as we work together with the Bosnian and Herzegovinian authorities to support the country's future. Threats of "de facto secession" and the dangerous and divisive nationalistic rhetoric over the reporting period only hurt the country and its citizens.

We underline the importance of reconciliation, peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans. The OSCE's Secretary General's visit in November last year, meeting all members of the Presidency was a clear demonstration of the OSCE's interest and role. I look forward to visiting myself.

I would like to highlight several of the Mission's areas of focus – on elections, hate motivated incidents, war crimes, and gender.

The UK recognises the support and advocacy of the Mission in reforming electoral processes, together with the International Community, NGOs, and partners in government. This is essential with general elections due to be held in October this year. We also welcome the work of the Mission, in co-operation with the NGO Pod Lupom, in strengthening the capacity of civil society to ensure impartial monitoring of elections in the four municipalities that held repeated and early elections in mid-2021. We continue to call on all parties to support necessary changes to electoral laws and processes, the lack of implementation should not prevent elections being held. We look forward to all citizens being able to enjoy their democratic rights by voting.

We welcome the Mission's work at the community level to develop system-wide solutions to prevent bias and hate motivated incidents and foster social cohesion. Likewise, your advocacy in schools to address divisive practices. Young people have the ability to be transformative in society, and it is essential that schools nurture inclusivity.

Breaking the culture of impunity is essential to addressing hate-motivated incidents. Your report mentions an increase in convictions under incitement to hatred charges. But we encourage institutions to do more to address hate motivated crimes adequately.

On War Crimes, we recognise your advocacy has led to the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council agreeing to a greater role in monitoring implementation of the Revised National Strategy for the Processing of War Crimes.

Finally, I wanted to focus on gender, which is essential in all areas of your work. We appreciate you have strengthened gender mainstreaming across the

Mission's nine field offices. Achieving gender equality is essential to more informed thinking and policies that benefit all of our populations. It is also a human right.

Mr Chair – to conclude – At this critical and dangerous time for Europe and European security, it is as important as ever to focus our efforts on building a peaceful, prosperous and thriving Bosnia and Herzegovina that benefits all of its people. Please be assured of the UK's support in working towards that goal and supporting the work of the OSCE in making it a reality.

Thank you Chair

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## Government protects vital Dawlish coastal rail route with a further £32 million

- Rail Minister announces another £32 million of funding to install new netting and fencing along the crucial Dawlish rail link
- works will give passengers safer, more reliable journeys and will future-proof the line and protect the local community following the severe storms in 2014
- new funding is part of government's £155 million investment to level up connections between communities in the South West

A further £32 million of funding to add vital netting and fencing along the iconic Dawlish and Holcombe route, protecting passengers and safeguarding access to the network for local residents, has today (1 April 2022) been announced by Rail Minister Wendy Morton.

This latest round of funding, which follows on from 3 earlier phases of work and takes the total to more than £150 million, will prevent storm debris from reaching the railway, creating strong resilient transport links to the area and giving passengers safer and more reliable journeys.

Following the devastating storms of 2014, which saw the railway damaged beyond use for 8 weeks, the government intervened to prevent this from happening again by launching the [South West Rail Resilience Programme \(SWRRP\)](#).

SWRRP is a £155 million commitment to create a more resilient railway, protect the safety of Dawlish's passengers and ensure that local communities are no longer at risk from being disconnected from the network for long periods of time.

Through this funding, the government has successfully rebuilt the sea wall

along the Marine Parade, added further cliff protection measures and implemented accessibility improvements.

Rail Minister Wendy Morton said:

Devon's iconic sea wall and the picturesque towns surrounding it are jewels in the British crown, and we're committed to protecting this vital line and the communities it serves.

Through our wider £155 million investment, we're also working to boost connectivity and support the thriving local economy and tourism.

The new funding is part of the SWRRP £155 million government investment to level up connections in the South West and deliver reliable and punctual journeys across Devon and Cornwall, boosting the local economy and tourism in the process. This includes:

- a £53 million complete upgrade to the train care depot in Exeter, improving service reliability and capacity for passengers across the region
- £80 million of funding to deliver a new sea wall at Dawlish, between Colonnades Bridge and Kennaway Tunnel, which opened in 2020, with the next phase of work to the east currently under construction

Mike Gallop, Network Rail's Western route director, said:

We are delighted to once again receive the support from government, which enables us to carry out the next phase of our resilience work between Dawlish and Teignmouth.

This will mean that passengers using GWR and CrossCountry services on this vital rail link to and from the South West will have more reliable journeys, as the railway along the Devon coast will be better protected from rising sea levels, extreme weather, landslips and rockfalls for the next 100 years.

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## **National Living Wage Increase boosts pay of low-paid workers**

The National Living Wage (NLW) will increase on Friday 1 April by 6.6 per cent to £9.50, providing a pay rise to millions of workers across the UK. There will be a real terms pay increase for 21-22 year olds who will see

their pay increase by 9.8 per cent to £9.18 per hour. These increases follow recommendations made to the Government by the Low Pay Commission in the autumn. The increase means a significant step forward towards reaching the target set by the Government for the NLW to reach two-thirds of median earnings by 2024.

The Government published its [remit](#) to the LPC for 2022 in March. This asks the Low Pay Commission (LPC) “to monitor the labour market and the impacts of the National Living Wage closely, advise on any emerging risks and – if the economic evidence warrants it – recommend that the government reviews its target or timeframe. This emergency brake will ensure that the lowest-paid workers continue to see pay rises without significant risks to their employment prospects.” The LPC will make its recommendations to Government on the 2023 National Minimum Wage rates in October.

Bryan Sanderson, Chair of the Low Pay Commission, said:

Minimum wage workers across the United Kingdom continue to play a vital role in ensuring a strong post-pandemic economic recovery. In previous years the LPC has sought to keep increases to the minimum wage above inflation. However, inflation is now expected to be higher than the forecasts we had when we made our recommendations last October.

Workers on the minimum wage; care for our elderly and sick, harvest and deliver our food, and do a multitude of other tasks which help us all. Many public sector workers including for example teaching assistants will also shortly be included. They all deserve to be properly remunerated and respected as key members of our society.

Therefore, while today’s NLW increase of 6.6 per cent gets us back on track to reach the 2024 target of two-thirds of median earnings, it will unfortunately likely be a real terms cut. Though, 21-22 year olds will receive a real terms increase with a rise of 9.8 per cent. We will soon make this group eligible for the NLW and judged it sensible to close the gap between the rates over a longer period, rather than a very large increase once they become eligible.

The Low Pay Commission met with around a hundred representative bodies last year before making its recommendations. We are frequently their main sometimes even their only advocates. With government support we will continue to try to ensure that they do not suffer from the neglect which was so often characteristic of the past.

The LPC has today published a short [report](#) which looks ahead at what the new rates will mean, and the path of the NLW to its target of two-thirds of median hourly earnings by 2024. Estimating the forward path of the NLW is very challenging as earnings growth is difficult to measure and predict in the current economic climate. Nevertheless, our estimate of the on-course rate of the NLW for 2023 is £10.32 (an 8.6% increase) and £10.95 in 2024 (a 6.1% increase). Because of the uncertainty we will update our estimates in the summer

Today, the other rates of the National Minimum Wage will also increase alongside the NLW.

	<b>Previous rate</b>	<b>Rate from April 2022</b>	<b>Increase</b>
National Living Wage	£8.91	£9.50	6.6%
21-22 Year Old Rate	£8.36	£9.18	9.8%
18-20 Year Old Rate	£6.56	£6.83	4.1%
16-17 Year Old Rate	£4.62	£4.81	4.1%
Apprentice Rate	£4.30	£4.81	11.9%
Accommodation Offset	£8.36	£8.70	4.1%

We are seeking evidence on the effects of the National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage, to inform our recommendations on the 2023 rates. This consultation will run from: 28 March to 20 June 2022. For more information on the consultation including how to respond please see [here](#).

## Notes for editors

1. The LPC originally submitted its recommendations in October 2021. The Government subsequently announced its acceptance of those recommendations on 27 October 2021. The LPC's [2021 Report](#), which sets out the evidence underpinning its recommendations, was published in December 2021.
2. Rationale for our recommendations: In October 2021 we judged that the economic situation had improved in 2021. GDP was approaching its pre-crisis level and the labour market was also recovering, with payroll employment above its pre-crisis level and vacancies hitting record levels, suggesting further improvement, although total employment remained below its pre-crisis level. In October, we also noted some risks to the economy relating to global supply chains, the end of the furlough scheme, rising input costs and staff availability. The improvement in the economic and labour market situation led us to recommend an NLW increase (6.6 per cent) that was expected to get the NLW back on track to the 2024 target, following the relatively low increase (2.2 per cent) in 2021. We plan to align the 21-22 Year Old Rate with the NLW by 2024, so we judged it sensible to reduce the gap between the 21-22 Year Old Rate and the NLW next year and recommended an increase of 9.8 per cent to £9.18. For the other youth rates we recommended an increase of 4.1 per cent because their labour market position was not as strong. We recommended going ahead with our previous proposal to align the Apprentice Rate with the 16-17 year old rate with



a 11.9 per cent increase. Our letter to the Minister and our full report provide more detail on our recommendations.

3. The National Living Wage (NLW) is the statutory minimum wage which will apply as of 1 April for workers aged 23 and over. Different minimum wage rates apply to 21-22 year olds, 18-20 year olds, 16-17 year olds and apprentices aged under 19 or in the first year of an apprenticeship.
4. The age threshold for the NLW will be reduced to 21 by 2024. This follows the LPC's review of the structure of the National Minimum Wage youth rates and its recommendations in 2019.
5. The Government published its remit to the LPC for 2022. In the remit, the Government asks the LPC "closely monitor developments in the labour market, including the impact of increases to the minimum wage rates, and advise on emerging risks ... if the economic evidence warrants it, the Low Pay Commission should advise the government to review the target or its timeframe. This emergency brake will ensure that the lowest-paid workers continue to see pay rises without significant risks to their employment prospects." The full remit letter is available [here](#).
6. Rates for workers aged under 23, and apprentices, are lower than the NLW in reflection of lower average earnings and higher unemployment rates. International evidence also suggests that younger workers are more exposed to employment risks arising from the pay floor than older workers. Unlike the NLW (where the possibility of some consequences for employment have been accepted by the Government), the LPC's remit requires us to set the rates for younger workers and apprentices as high as possible without causing damage to jobs and hours.
7. The Accommodation Offset is an allowable deduction from wages for accommodation, applicable for each day of the week. In April 2022 it will increase to £8.70 per day.
8. The National Living Wage is different from the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage calculated by the Living Wage Foundation. Differences include that: the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage are voluntary pay benchmarks that employers can sign up to if they wish, not legally binding requirements; the hourly rate of the UK Living Wage and London Living Wage is based on an attempt to measure need, whereas the National Living Wage is based on a target relationship between its level and average pay; the UK Living Wage and London Living Wage apply to workers aged 18 and over, the National Living Wage to workers aged 23 and over. The Low Pay Commission has no role in the UK Living Wage or the London Living Wage.
9. The Low Pay Commission is an independent body made up of employers, trade unions and experts whose role is to advise the Government on the minimum wage. The rate recommendations introduced today were agreed unanimously by the Commission.
10. The current Low Pay Commissioners are: Bryan Sanderson, Professor Patricia Rice, Professor Jonathan Wadsworth, Kate Bell, Kay Carberry, Simon Sapper, Matthew Fell, Louise Fisher and Martin McTague.
11. Bryan Sanderson can be contacted via the Low Pay Commission's press office (0207 211 8132).