

PM call with President Trump: 20 February 2020



The Prime Minister and President Trump spoke this evening and discussed a range of bilateral and international issues.

The leaders reiterated their commitment to the UK-US relationship and looked forward to seeing each other at the G7 Summit in the United States in June.

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New rulebook confirms fee transparency requirements and clarifies others

CCEA Regulation, Ofqual and Qualifications Wales have today (20 February 2020) published the [decisions of their joint consultation](#) into changes to the rules that regulated awarding organisations must follow in each jurisdiction. These rules are known as the General Conditions of Recognition in England and Northern Ireland, and the Standard Conditions of Recognition in Wales.

The regulators have all adopted three substantive changes to their rules following a detailed analysis of the consultation responses:

1. All regulated awarding organisations must publish on their website fee information about their qualifications in a standard format that is easily accessible to potential purchasers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Ofqual will retain its existing requirement that awarding organisations must provide fee information to purchasers in markets outside England upon request.*
2. All regulated awarding organisations must publish a policy that makes clear to users of qualifications whether or not they recognise prior learning. Each awarding organisation will have the flexibility to

determine its own approach to producing its policy. The proposed rule has been amended to make clear that there is no necessity for awarding organisations to recognise prior learning.

3. The introduction of an explicit new rule that the regulators can use to instruct awarding organisations not to issue results. This change will make sure the regulators can act quickly in the rare cases where it is necessary to secure a delay in the issuing of results. They do not expect or intend to intervene more often as a result of this change.

The first two changes will be introduced on 1 October 2020, to align with the need for awarding organisations to state compliance with each regulators' rules on an annual basis. The third change will take effect in early March 2020, as it does not impose any proactive requirements on awarding organisations.

A number of other changes have also been adopted that will help to improve awarding organisations' understanding of the rules and keep them up-to-date. These will also take effect from 1 October 2020, with some additional guidance coming into force immediately.

Today's decisions follow a [joint consultation](#) that ran from 2 August to 25 October 2019. We have published detailed analysis of the consultation responses along with a summary of additional feedback gathered at a series of stakeholder events and meetings held across the three countries.

Ofqual is also today launching two separate consultations. One is on [new guidance in relation to the publication of fee information](#). The guidance supports the introduction of the new rules and has been developed in conjunction with CCEA Regulation and Qualifications Wales. The second relates to how awarding organisations may approach the process of preventing, detecting, and investigating [malpractice and maladministration](#), and deciding what action to take as a result.

Philip Blaker, Chief Executive, Qualifications Wales:

I am pleased that the three regulators for England, Northern Ireland and Wales have been able to work together so effectively to deliver the changes we are announcing today. We collectively recognise the importance to awarding organisations of having consistency in our rules where it is at all possible, and clarity where differences must apply. The changes that we have brought in ensure that there continues to be significant alignment across our rules.

Sally Collier, Chief Regulator, Ofqual:

We are convinced that the introduction of a requirement for awarding organisations to publish fee information will benefit purchasers of qualifications across Northern Ireland, Wales and England. While price is only one factor that purchasers should

consider, the absence of full price transparency in the qualifications market creates the risk of unfairness and inefficiency. I believe the decisions we have announced today help to create a level playing field in our home markets, while accepting that a more flexible approach is needed in other markets around the world in order for the awarding organisations we regulate to remain competitive.

Justin Edwards, Chief Executive, CCEA Regulation:

As qualifications regulators we are committed to protecting the interests of learners, maintaining standards in qualifications and promoting confidence in the qualifications system. The feedback we received to our consultation from awarding organisations and other stakeholders was very positive, and we are pleased to be able to confirm how we have taken it on board. The rules we have amended and adopted will stand the sector in good stead over coming years.

ENDS.

Notes to Editors

*This decision was unique to Ofqual, as, unlike CCEA Regulation and Qualifications Wales, its rules apply wherever a regulated qualification is taken around the world.

[Welsh Secretary visits Ferryside rescue team to celebrate £40,000 funding boost](#)

- Lifesaving search and rescue teams in Wales to receive share of £1 million to boost resources
- Over £70,000 will be provided to fund vital equipment for Ferryside Lifeboat crew and North Wales Mountain Rescue Association
- Fund has awarded almost £6 million to date, saving lives on UK waterways

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart is visiting St. John Cymru Ferryside Lifeboat crew in Carmarthenshire today (Thursday 20 February) following the announcement of a £1 million UK Government funding boost for two Welsh search and rescue teams.

The funding, confirmed by Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps, will benefit 50 charities across the UK to provide essential search and rescue

equipment.

During his visit, Mr Hart will hear how the Ferryside Lifeboat crew will use the £40,000 of UK Government funding to purchase new communications devices and protective gear.

Volunteer, Simon Lambie, will explain how the new equipment will allow them to boost their ability to search for missing people in water and rescue those who are stranded.

The North Wales Mountain Rescue Association, which has also been awarded over £31,000 today, has been using equipment part-funded by previous UK inshore lifeboat grants to undertake vital searches of the River Dee in the wake of storm Ciara and Dennis.

This new round of funding will be used to replace protective kit and purchase rescue equipment such as water rafts and sleds, improving the teams' capabilities in the event of floods and water incidences.

Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps said:

Our rescue boat teams carry out vital work to keep our rivers, lakes and inshore areas safe.

These inspirational charities and their dedicated volunteers save lives every day and this additional funding will ensure that they have the craft, equipment, and resources to provide these services all year round.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

Volunteer and charitable organisations across Wales work selflessly 24/7 to provide life-saving support to the public.

These organisations are absolutely vital in protecting our communities and I'm therefore delighted to see Welsh services benefitting from the latest round of UK Government funding.

This money will help ensure that the Ferryside Lifeboat crew and North Wales Mountain Rescue Association have the equipment they need to continue delivering their crucial work.

Chief Executive for St John Cymru, Helen Smith said:

We're delighted to have the support of the UK Government to help our team of volunteers in Ferryside to continue their lifesaving work.

Working on the water is incredibly tough and the exposure to the elements, coupled with the nature of the role means the lifecycle of equipment is short.

Ensuring our volunteers are properly equipped to perform their roles is of uttermost importance and this newest round of funding will really help us in supporting our volunteers so they can continue to be there for their local community and those who get into difficulty.

Simon Lamble of St John Cymru said:

Our team of volunteers work incredibly hard to raise funding to help us to continue to provide vital services in our community. This grant is a huge boost which will enable us to save more lives across the Towy, Taf and Gwendraeth river estuaries and help us continue to be there when we are needed.

Gerald Davison from the NWMRA said:

Over successive weekends NWMRA team members made good use of Water Rescue equipment in part provided by the Rescue Boat Grant Fund while tasked with water rescue and search incidents during storms Ciara and Dennis in North Wales. We were deployed on flood rescue work at Llanfair TH and St Asaph and a water search for a missing person near Llangollen.

The provision of the right equipment in the correct quantities and sizes permits our highly trained team members to respond quickly and effectively when flood and other water related incidents arise.

Our volunteers are an integral part of the multi-agency response to incidents as core participants in the North Wales Local Resilience Forum.

Since launching in 2014, the Rescue Grant Boat Fund has provided £5.7 million to 104 charities around the UK.

A full list of successful charities can be found [on the Department for Transport's website.](#)

[Vacancy: Head of Business Support](#)



Would you like to work for a high profile organisation leading and inspiring the teams providing business support services to the AAIB's investigations?

Are you a highly organised individual who embraces challenge and getting the best out of people in a busy and high pressure environment?

We're recruiting for a Head of Business Support. Further information including how to apply can be found on the [Civil Service Jobs website](#)

[Read more about working at the AAIB](#)

The deadline for applications is Wednesday 11 March.

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[Vacancy: Inspector of Air Accidents \(Recorded Data\)](#)



Are you passionate about aircraft accident investigation and looking for a high profile role at the leading edge of aviation safety?

Aircraft accident investigation has never been more demanding and the AAIB remains one of the leading air safety investigation authorities in the world.

The purpose of this role is to investigate all recorded data aspects of aircraft accidents and serious incidents involving civil aircraft operating in the UK, its overseas territories and Crown Dependencies, and to assist those in other countries when there is a significant UK interest.

Further information including how to apply can be found on the [Civil Service Jobs website](#).

[Read about life as a Recorded Data Inspector](#)

The deadline for applications is Friday 20 March.

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