

[This business rates revaluation has exposed the fundamental flaws in this outdated system of taxation – Teresa Pearce](#)

Teresa Pearce MP, Labour's Shadow

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, responding to the IFS analysis of the business rates revaluation on local authorities, said:

“This business rates revaluation has exposed the fundamental flaws in this outdated system of taxation. Those flaws will be further magnified once 100% business rate retention comes into effect.

“Our high streets are already struggling – and this revaluation will signal the end for many small businesses, such as independent pubs at the heart of community life.

“The current system means that councils won't see a sharp increase in their revenue – but once 100% retention kicks in, some councils may be rolling in cash whilst others are left out in the cold.

“Businesses and councils need far more support and stability than the Government is currently offering. The Government must re-evaluate the business rates system and produce something which works for communities across our regions and the businesses they rely on.”

[Labour welcomes House of Commons Select Committee calls for mission-based industrial strategy](#)

The non-partisan House of Commons select committee for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has today released a report calling for a new mission-based approach to industrial strategy. The select committee's report criticises the Government's sector based

strategy for 'picking winners' and for lacking 'meaningful metrics' to determine success.

In its report the select committee backed the 'mission-based' approach to industrial strategy, which is also advocated by the Labour Party. Labour's industrial strategy will be challenge-led, mission-oriented and values-driven – providing a long-term vision for the economy that mobilises both public and private investment.

Chi Onwurah MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for industrial strategy, commented:

"This report reaffirms what we've been saying all along: cherry-picking favoured sectors for backroom deals is no substitute for a real long-term vision. Theresa May says she wants to see a high-wage, high-growth economy, but public investment has fallen to half the amount it was under Labour and her sectoral approach is leaving the vast majority of British workers out in the cold.

"Labour's industrial strategy will be led by the big challenges of our time, from decarbonizing the economy to caring for an ageing population. Rather than taking a scatter-gun approach to sectors and technologies, we're setting out key missions, such as drawing 60 per cent of our energy from low carbon sources by 2030."

Ends

Notes to editors:

An article by Iain Wright MP, who chairs the select committee, summarising the report's findings can be found here: <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/very-little-industry-and-still-less-strategy-wdt7f99wd>

[GCSE 9 to 1 grades](#)



[The new 9 to 1 GCSE grades](#)

The vast majority of students taking GCSEs in England in 2019 will receive grades from 9 to 1. Students taking 5 lesser-taught GCSE subjects (Biblical Hebrew, Gujarati, Persian, Portuguese and Turkish) will receive letter grades in 2019 before they become numerical (9 to 1) in 2020.

9 things to know about the new GCSE grades

1. GCSEs in England have been reformed and are graded with from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade.
2. GCSE content is more challenging.
3. Fewer grade 9s are awarded than A*s.
4. The new grades are being brought in to signal that GCSEs have been reformed and to better differentiate between students of different abilities.
5. In the first year each new GCSE subject has been introduced, broadly the same proportion of students get a grade 4 or above as would have got a grade C or above in the old system.
6. These changes are only happening in England. Wales and Northern Ireland are not introducing the new 9 to 1 grading scale as part of their changes to GCSEs.
7. English language, English literature and maths were the first to be graded from 9 to 1 in 2017.
8. Another 20 subjects had 9 to 1 grading in 2018, with most others following in 2019. During this transition, students received a mixture of letter and number grades.
9. You can see how the 9 to 1 grades compare with the A* to G scale in our [GCSE grading postcard](#).

GCSE science

GCSEs for science have changed in England. Students taking separate science GCSEs now get a grade from 9 to 1 in each subject. Combined science draws content from all three subjects and students receive an award worth two GCSEs, consisting of two equal or adjacent grades.

5 things to know about combined science GCSEs

1. Students taking separate science GCSEs get a grade from 9 to 1 for each subject, with 9 being the highest grade.
2. Students studying combined science receive an award worth two GCSEs, consisting of two equal or adjacent grades from 9 to 1 (9-9, 9-8, 8-8, 8-7, 7-7...to 1-1).
3. If the numbers are different, the highest number will always be reported on the left.
4. Students do at least 8 practical activities (16 for combined science) covering specific apparatus and techniques.
5. Exam questions about practical work make up at least 15% of the total marks for the qualification.

More information

We've got lots of information to help students, parents, teachers and businesses understand the changes. You can:

And if you've got any questions, drop us an email at public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk or give us a call on 0300 303 3344.

Published 3 March 2017

Last updated 6 August 2019 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 6 August 2019 Updated to reflect that we are in the third year of GCSE reforms.
2. 22 December 2017 Article now shows the updated video.
3. 23 August 2017 Added results day guides for students and parents.
4. 3 March 2017 First published.

[News story: Ofqual conference 2017 – presentations from the day](#)

The annual Ofqual conference is for awarding organisations we regulate, these are the presentations from the day.

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Economy Secretary opens new library in Holywell

The new facility, which is located within Holywell Leisure centre, will offer modern and vibrant facilities to local residents.

Ken Skates hopes that the library's location within Holywell leisure centre will draw in new users who might not have visited a stand alone library.

The library is a joint project between the Welsh Government and Flintshire Council and has been supported by a £120,000 from Welsh Government with the remainder of the funding coming from Flintshire Council. The total cost of the project is £235,580.

The Economy Secretary was joined at the visit by pupils from Whitford and St. Winefride Primary Schools. He said:

"I am really pleased to be officially opening this excellent new facility in Holywell. It is the result of a successful partnership between Welsh Government and Flintshire Council and will offer vibrant and modern services to local people.

"The location of the library within the leisure centre will open up a wide variety of learning, culture and leisure opportunities to people who may not have visited their local library before.

"This is something I am committed to as it will not only ensure that more people access the excellent services offered by Holywell Library, but also help to ensure the library's long term viability.

"Another benefit of co-locating the library with the leisure centre is that some of its services will be available to users even when the library is not staffed – something I hope will attract even more users."

Leader of Flintshire County Council, Councillor Aaron Shotton, said:

"I am delighted to see the library relocated to its new home in the leisure centre. This modern hub in Holywell is similar to the one which was opened at Deeside Leisure Centre last year.

"Co-location means that customers are able to access a wider range of services in one convenient place. This move supports the Council's Community Asset Transfer programme."

At the official opening the Economy Secretary also witnessed the signing of the co-operative agreement for the Holywell Leisure Centre which will see it being handed to the community. The agreement is between Flintshire County Council and the Holywell Leisure Centre Group with Holywell Town Council providing funding support in 2017/18.