



Update on post-16 qualifications reform

AO-Forum presentation at:

<https://www.awardingorganisation.com/archive/>

DfE Guide to Post-16 Qualifications:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-post-16-qualifications-at-level-3-in-england--2>

Post-16 Qualifications: Funding

At the recent AO-Forum Conference on 27 April, the Department for Education presented an update on *Post-16 Qualifications Reform*. In summary ...

Only qualifications that are necessary, high quality and have a clear purpose, will be approved for funding in future at 16-19 and for adults.

DfE are reforming the qualifications market at level 3 so that A Levels and T Levels become the qualifications of choice at 16-19. However, they recognise that there will need to be other qualifications, at both level 3 and level 2 and below, to support this core offer. Qualifications at level 2 will support progression to further study/training at level 3, or support progression directly into skilled employment.

Small Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs) will be between 150-450 GLH, equivalent to 1 A level in size, typically to be taken in a mixed study programme alongside two A levels. Large AAQs will be between 720 and 1080 GLH, equivalent to at least 2 A levels in size.

AAQs will be approved against new funding approval criteria and in two approval cycles: cycle 1 qualifications will be taught from September 2025, with cycle 2 from September 2026. Qualifications will be approved for funding for 3 years rather than the current 12 months.

Providers will know by May 2024 which qualifications have been approved in the first cycle for delivery from August 2025. A detailed list of the subjects that will be available from 2025 and from 2026 is provided in the Guide to the Post-16 Qualifications Landscape, see link on the left.



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AO-Forum: Ofqual Update

Ofqual provided an update on recent activities at the AO-Forum Conference:

Last May Ofqual published guidance for **designing and developing accessible assessments**, particularly written assessments. AOs should be able to demonstrate how assessment materials commissioned since 12 November 2022 reflect this – and it is important to note that Ofqual will be monitoring the outcomes and publishing further updates as a result. Current guidance is at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-d-general-requirements-for-regulated-qualifications>

The **Ofqual Student Guide 2023** (Last updated 18 April 2023) provides you with information about this year's arrangements for qualifications regulated by Ofqual.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofqual-student-guide-2023>

Ofqual shared some interesting recent numbers:

235 AOs, 37 of which were recognised in the past year (mostly EPAOs).

16,009 certifiable qualifications available to new learners.

588 approved EPA standards.



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More info about HTQs:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/qualifications/higher-technical-qualifications/>

T Levels: Where Are We Now?

IfATE introduced T Levels in 2020. Summer 2022 saw the first cohort of T Level students complete their courses, with a pass rate of over 92%. There are now 16 T Levels available, with 164 T Level providers who have registered around 10,200 students to T Levels in this academic year – more than double the previous year. There are over 100 new providers planning delivery of T Levels in Sept 2023.

Level 4/5 Reforms – Higher Technical qualifications (HTQs)

HTQs are level 4 or 5 qualifications that have been quality marked by IfATE to indicate their alignment to employer-led occupational standards. They can follow on from T Levels (which are Level 3) or can be taken independently. Work is also ongoing around funding, regulations & emerging skills. **Submit your qualifications for a quality-mark?** New or existing level 4 or 5 qualifications will receive a quality-mark from IfATE if the qualification satisfies their approvals criteria.