



Department
for Education

ofqual

Chair of Ofqual

Information pack



WELCOME



Thank you for your interest in becoming the new Chair of the Ofqual board.

We are looking for an exceptional individual to take on the role of Chair of the Ofqual board. This is one of the central leadership roles in English education and with the term of the current interim Chair due to end this year, we are looking for an outstanding candidate to take on this exciting and challenging national role.

Qualifications open doors and shape lives, as well as having a strong influence on what is taught in schools and colleges. High quality qualifications that lead to good progression outcomes are essential to a productive economy. It is therefore critical to both students and employers that young people and adults have qualifications that are trusted and reliable indicators of their knowledge and skills. As the independent qualifications and assessments regulator in England, Ofqual plays a vital role in ensuring that qualifications and assessments are valid, valued and delivered safely and efficiently, with outcomes that are accurate, fair and command public confidence.

The new Chair will play a key role in shaping the qualifications and assessment system for years to come, whilst adapting to the challenges and opportunities of today, and for the future. These challenges and opportunities include ongoing reforms to post-16 qualifications and longer term reform through the Advanced British Standard announced by the Prime Minister in October 2023.

We are seeking to appoint an outstanding individual with first rate strategic thinking capabilities to steer Ofqual through these challenges. You will have experience of working successfully at the most senior level, ideally in either the education or training sector. You will need the ability to inspire confidence across the education and training sectors, awarding organisations, Government Ministers, Parliament, the public and Ofqual itself. You will also need strong communication skills to build effective working relationships with the Ofqual executive and with a wide range of partners and stakeholders. This is a significant challenge, but a fascinating and rewarding one.

Thank you for your interest and for taking the time to read this pack. If you have the skills and experience described above, I hope that you will want to apply. My Department is focused on equality of opportunity and I am committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities they serve. I therefore particularly encourage applicants from under-represented groups, those based outside London and the South East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.

I hope that you find this opportunity inspiring and exciting and that you will want to explore it in greater depth. If you do, and wish to have an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact: ofqualchair.recruitment@education.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State for Education



Ofqual is the independent, expert regulator of qualifications and assessments for England. Ofqual regulates in the interests of students of all ages and apprentices.

Most of us will have memories of taking exams as part of our school career. Qualifications – taken in schools, colleges, training centres or the workplace – play a key role, not just in our education system but in our economy too. They open doors to new opportunities. For employers, they help to inform recruitment and to develop their people.

In total, Ofqual regulates over 16,000 qualifications – each with a specific purpose, designed to meet a particular need. That includes well known qualifications such as GCSEs, A levels, T Levels and BTECs; Apprenticeship End Point Assessments; niche qualifications that are industry critical; and leisure qualifications that recognise achievement for thousands of people each year in just about every field you can imagine.

Ofqual's job is to oversee around 230 organisations that provide those qualifications, as well as regulating national assessments in primary schools.

Ofqual is working with the Department for Education on an important and extensive programme of reforms to vocational and technical qualifications, to ensure that every publicly funded qualification is high quality and will support young people and adults to progress to further study or skilled employment. This includes the continued roll out of T Levels and supporting their live delivery, as well as wider improvements to qualifications at levels 3 and below, and the introduction of Higher Technical Qualifications.

In October 2023, the Prime Minister also announced a longer-term plan to introduce the Advanced British Standard. This will be a new baccalaureate-style qualification for 16–19-year-olds that takes the best of A levels and T Levels and brings them together into a single, unified qualification. Ofqual will have an important regulatory role in the implementation of this major reform.

Ofqual is tasked directly by Parliament to do its job: in particular to maintain standards and promote public confidence in qualifications, wherever they are designed to be used. In doing so it works very closely with the Department, which sets the policy framework within which it operates.

In fulfilling its role, Ofqual keeps its eyes open to the impact of qualifications on education and training by engaging widely with a wide range of stakeholders across the education sector as well as employers and the public.

For further information about Ofqual please visit: [Ofqual - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Ofqual's strategic priorities are set out here: [Ofqual corporate plan 2022 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

HOW OFQUAL WORKS

When Ofqual was established, it was given significant regulatory powers to enable it to achieve the objectives it was set. Ofqual sets requirements on those it regulates which they are legally obliged to fulfil. It has the ability to flex those rules to meet changing circumstances. It tests and makes expert judgements about compliance with its rules, and then takes action to address any issues it finds.

It is in everyone's interests that standards are maintained, and qualifications are relevant and trusted. Ofqual works hard to make its expectations clear. It undertakes an annual programme of research that gives evidence and authority to its actions and supports the whole system to improve.

Ofqual continually monitors the greatest threats to the validity of, and public confidence in, qualifications, assessing their risk and prioritising its actions accordingly.

Ofqual's corporate services are key to enabling all that it needs to achieve. Its information management systems are cutting edge, and it has a strong track record of investing in the development of its people, as evidenced by the Civil Service People Survey results 2023.



ABOUT THE ROLE

As Chair of Ofqual, you will be responsible for chairing the board which provides strategic leadership of the organisation.

Your main responsibilities will be to:

- ensure that the board is effective in providing good governance, challenge and support to the work of Ofqual
- lead the board in developing a strategy for discharging its statutory duties
- promote the efficient and effective use of Ofqual's resource, including that Ofqual has the right people and culture to be successful
- be an effective representative of Ofqual and its board both internally and externally, maintaining effective relationships with key leaders in education, training and industry
- ensure that board members are aware of their duties and responsibilities and that a code of practice for board members is in place, and encourage high standards of propriety
- provide for the induction, training, objectives and performance assessment of individual board members and succession planning for the board as a whole to ensure the board has the right skills for the work it is asked to do
- act as a point of contact between Ofqual, Ministers and Parliament, as appropriate
- work continuously to improve the performance of the board

Close and regular liaison on a range of matters between the Chair and the Chief Regulator and other senior Ofqual staff is essential. An effective working relationship between the Chair and the Chief Regulator is of key importance to the well-being of the organisation and to the efficient progress of business.



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Department for Education is focused on equality of opportunity and is committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities which they serve. We particularly encourage applicants from under-represented groups, those based outside London and the South East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.

The Department has a strong culture of inclusion and diversity and it wants to encourage applications from people with a diverse range of backgrounds and educational routes. We want to ensure any appointee to the Department's arm's length bodies is committed to promoting diversity, in its broadest possible sense. This will include embedding a commitment to the principles of levelling up and championing opportunity for all across the organisation, helping to ensure that the organisation is one which a genuinely diverse range of views can be expressed, without fear or favour.

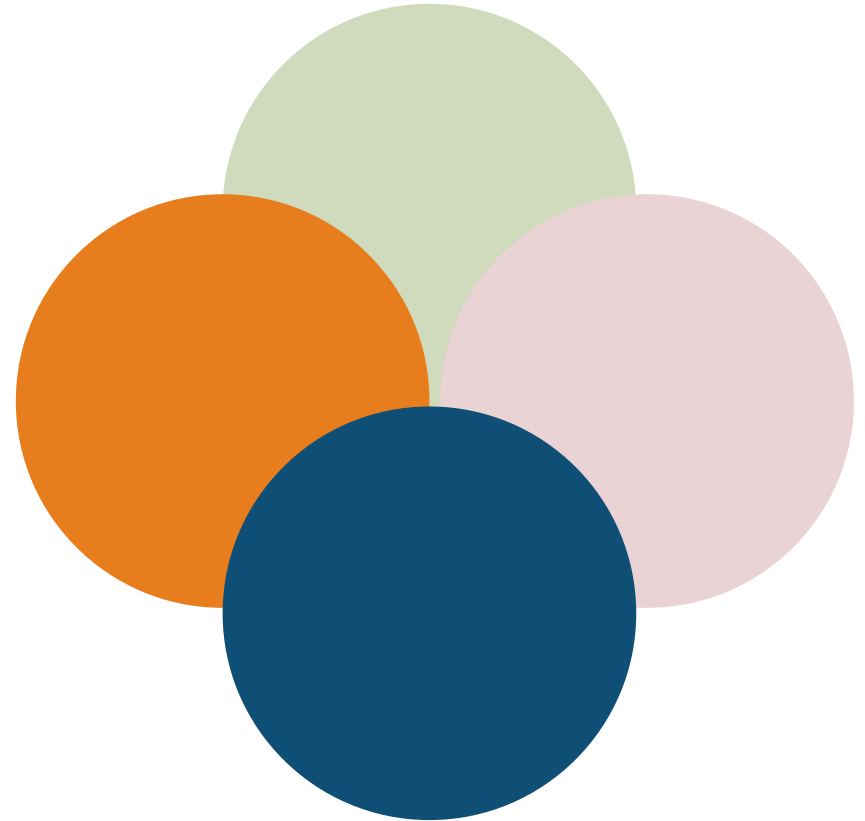
CHAMPIONING SOCIAL MOBILITY

The Department champions social mobility in all of its policies and is committed to opening up opportunities for people from all backgrounds, all socio-economic classes and all regions of the UK. We are committed to embedding this principle into our recruitment and public appointments and expect all our leaders, including in arm's length bodies, to take action to attract and retain staff from all backgrounds, while also supporting them to progress within their careers.

DISABILITY CONFIDENT

We are a member of the Government's Disability Confident scheme and have achieved Disability Confident Leader status, signifying our role as champions of the scheme. We use the Disability Confident symbol, along with other like-minded employers, to show our commitment to good practice in employing people with a disability.

We ask that all applicants complete an anonymised Diversity Monitoring Form used for gathering data only in order to ensure departments are recruiting from the widest possible pool. The information you provide is held by the Public Appointments team and not shared with the selection panel.



WHO WE'RE LOOKING FOR

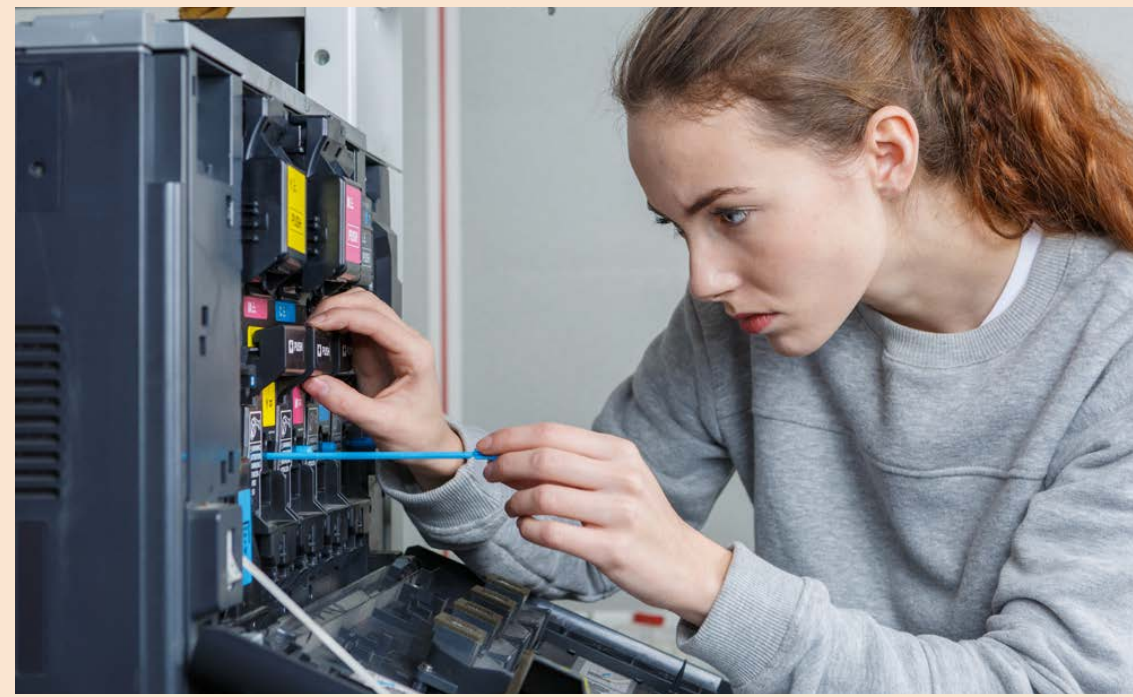
We recommend that applicants familiarise themselves with the work of Ofqual.

The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate the following **essential** criteria:

- evidence of working successfully at the most senior level in the public, voluntary or private sector
- first-rate strategic thinking capabilities which can be used to steer Ofqual through existing and future challenges
- a commitment to ensuring that qualifications and assessments are rigorous, valid and reliable, command the confidence of parents, students and teachers, meet the needs of employers and play their part in economic development and a successful education system
- highly effective communication skills and the ability to command the respect, and inspire the confidence of, Ministers, Parliament, awarding organisations and leaders in the education sector and of the Ofqual executive, as well as of students, parents and the general public; including the ability to represent Ofqual effectively in the media
- the ability to navigate the political landscape skilfully, and a good understanding of the Government's educational reform programme and the role of the regulator in implementing the reforms

The following are **desirable** criteria:

- a track record of success in board level financial, commercial and people management
- experience at senior leadership level, ideally beyond a single school or college, in the education or training sectors, and in particular an understanding of the role that qualifications play in an effective education and skills system
- awareness of strategic approaches to regulation and the factors that enable effective regulatory practice



HOW TO APPLY

The closing date for applications is 22nd March 2024 at 11am.

In order to apply you will need to **create an account** or **sign in**. Once you are logged into your account, click on 'apply for this role' and follow the on-screen instructions.

To apply, all candidates are required to provide:

- a Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- a supporting statement
- equality information
- information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues

We will ask you to check and confirm your personal details to ensure your application is accurate.

You will also have the opportunity to make a reasonable adjustment request or apply under the Disability Confident Scheme before you submit your application.

The Advisory Assessment Panel reserves the right to consider only applications that contain all of the elements listed above, and that arrive before the published deadline for applications.

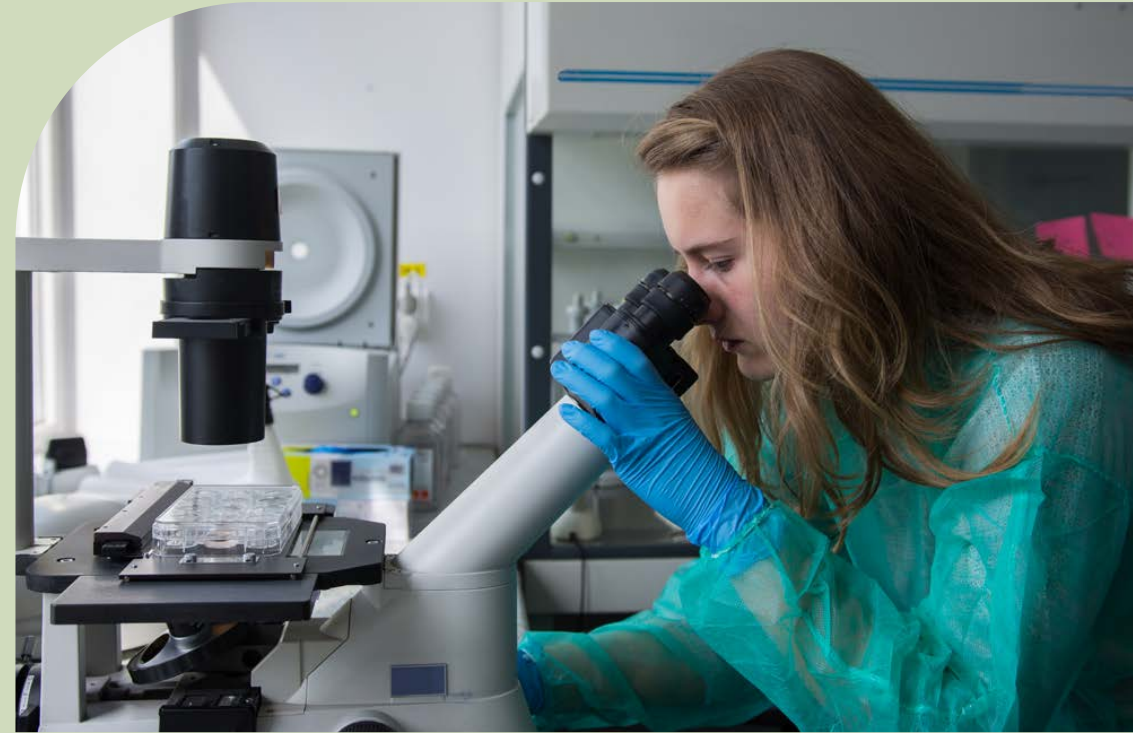
If a large number of applications is received, preliminary sifting will be carried out using only the following two essential criteria:

- evidence of working successfully at the most senior level in the public, voluntary or private sector
- highly effective communication skills and the ability to command the respect, and inspire the confidence, of Ministers, Parliament, awarding organisations and leaders in the education sector and of the Ofqual executive, as well as of students, parents and the general public; including the ability to represent Ofqual effectively in the media

Please note the following:

- we cannot accept applications submitted after the closing date
- applications will be assessed solely on the documentation provided; please refer to the advert and checklist above to ensure you have provided everything requested
- applications will be acknowledged upon receipt
- we cannot provide feedback at application stage; feedback will only be given to candidates unsuccessful following interview
- if a large number of applications are received and a preliminary sift is undertaken, some applications may not be considered in full by all members of the panel

This appointment comes under the scrutiny of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Sir William Shawcross, and his office.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

This appointment is made by the Secretary of State under paragraph 2(1)(a) and paragraph 3A of Schedule 9 to Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

This appointment is also made in compliance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments Code, which requires you to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life (see below).

TIME REQUIREMENT

Approximately two days per week, although the successful candidate may need to work additional hours as necessary for the proper performance of their duties.

LOCATION

The post will be based in Ofqual's Coventry office, One Friargate, Coventry, CV1 2GN.

Ofqual works flexibly, with a hybrid office/home based working model. The role may also require some national travel.

START DATE

Ofqual has an interim Chair in post for up to 12 months from 1 January 2024. The successful candidate will be expected to take up post as soon as possible, and by 1 January 2025 at the latest.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

Initial appointment will be for up to 3 years, subject to performance. The Secretary of State may recommend that the appointment be renewed at the end of the first period of office, subject to consistently good performance. There should therefore be no expectation of automatic reappointment. The maximum total term is 10 years.

REMUNERATION

The successful candidate will receive an honorarium of £55,000 per annum.

Remuneration is taxable under Schedule E and subject to Class 1 National Insurance contributions.

The Chair will also be eligible to claim expenses for travel and subsistence costs incurred on Ofqual business, in line with Ofqual's expenses policy.

PENSION

The post is not pensionable.

DISQUALIFICATION FROM APPOINTMENT

The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards.

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you are disqualified from acting as a company director (under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986)
- have an unspent conviction on your criminal record
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors

MORE INFORMATION

You may also find it helpful to review the [Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies](#). This sets out the expectations which the Government places on members of public bodies.



PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

INTEGRITY

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.



HOW TO COMPLAIN

Please contact the Department for Education's Public Appointments Team if you would like to make a complaint regarding your application at:

PublicAppointments.DFE@education.gov.uk

We will acknowledge your complaint upon receipt and respond within 15 working days.

If you are not content with our response please contact the Commissioner for Public Appointments at:

publicappointments@csc.gov.uk

Further information on complaints can be found on the Commissioner for Public Appointment's website: [Complaints - Commissioner for Public Appointments \(independent.gov.uk\)](https://www.independent.gov.uk)