



Department
for Education

ofqual

Chief Regulator, Ofqual

Information pack





Thank you for your interest in becoming the new Chief Regulator at Ofqual.

The Chief Regulator is one of the central leadership roles in English education. We are looking for an exceptional individual to take on this exciting and high-profile national role from 1 January 2025, when the current interim Chief Regulator's term comes to an end.

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 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 assessment are valid, valued and delivered safely and efficiently, with outcomes that are accurate, fair and command public confidence.

As Ofqual's Chief Regulator, you will be responsible for delivering on Ofqual's statutory duties, including to maintain standards and promote confidence in qualifications and assessments, 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 experience at a senior level, ideally in either the education or regulatory sectors. You will need substantial leadership experience, a range of managerial skills including the management of complex programmes, and a high degree of personal integrity and resilience. You will also need strong communication skills and the ability to inspire confidence across the education sector, awarding organisations, Government Ministers, Parliament, the public and Ofqual itself; and stakeholder management skills to build effective working relationships with a wide range of partners. 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 which 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 Jenny Oldroyd/Stuart Miller, Directors for Curriculum and General Qualifications, at jobshare.oldroyd-miller@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; Apprenticeships 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 235 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.

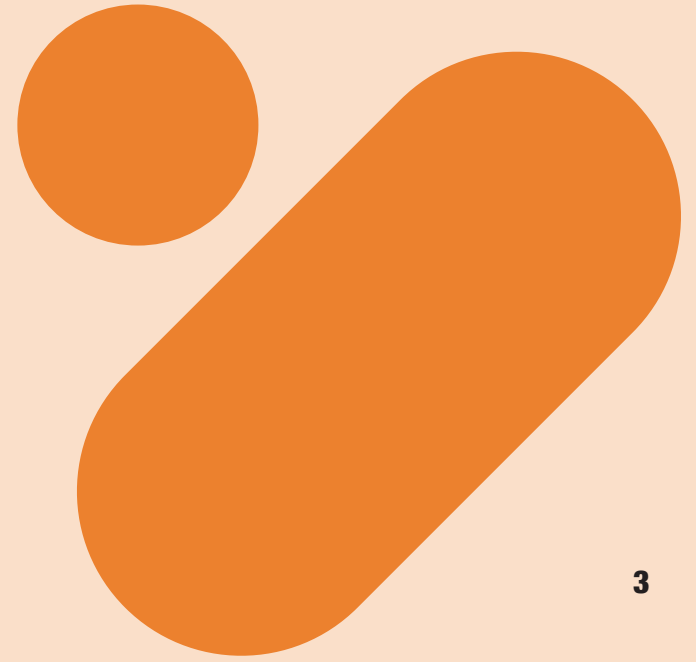
In October 2023, the Prime Minister also announced a longer-term plan to introduce the Advanced British Standard. This will be a new baccalaureate-style qualification for 16–19-year-olds that takes the best of A levels and T Levels and brings them together into a single, unified qualification. Ofqual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

Ofqual is tasked directly by Parliament to do this 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 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](http://GOV.UK (www.gov.uk))

Ofqual’s strategic priorities are set out here: [Ofqual corporate plan 2022 to 2025 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://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 Chief Regulator / Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Ofqual, you will be responsible for delivering on Ofqual's statutory objectives and duties – including to maintain standards and promote confidence in qualifications and assessments.

Your main responsibilities will be to:

- Lead Ofqual in acting as the independent regulator of qualifications and assessments in England
- Act as a public face of Ofqual, representing Ofqual to the public, Ministers and Parliament
- Lead public debate in relation to the maintenance of both standards and confidence in examinations, qualifications and assessments
- Ensure that the awarding organisations delivering regulated qualifications in England execute their roles in a way that is as fair as possible to all students
- Ensure that qualification reform programmes are delivered successfully, working closely with government and awarding organisations. This will include the development and delivery of the new Advanced British Standard announced by the Prime Minister in October 2023
- Be responsible for the overall leadership, management, organisation and staffing of the organisation, building capacity and capability to deliver on major qualifications reforms alongside the effective delivery of the existing system
- Act as the HM Treasury-appointed Accounting Officer for Ofqual, accountable directly to Parliament for the use of Ofqual's public assets, in line with the requirements set out in Managing Public Money
- Promote the values underpinning Ofqual, through personal leadership and example
- Coordinate and implement policies and actions determined by the Board



The Department 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 for Education 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 in 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

The Department is a member of the Government's Disability Confident scheme and has achieved Disability Confident Leader status, signifying our role as champions of the scheme. Along with other like-minded employers, we use the Disability Confident symbol 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 role of the Chief Regulator set out in Part 7 of the [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009](#) and the [Education Act 2011](#) and with the work of Ofqual.

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

- A proven track record of operating successfully in a senior leadership role, including the delivery of major projects - demonstrating the ability to play a key role in the leadership of the English education system and to provide strong and inspirational leadership to Ofqual and to the qualifications and wider education sector through a challenging period
- A commitment to ensuring that qualifications and assessments are fair, rigorous, valid and reliable
- The ability to communicate effectively with, and command the respect and inspire the confidence of, Ministers, Parliament, awarding organisations and leaders in the education sector and of the Ofqual board and staff, 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
- Demonstrated ability to understand and process statistical information and academic research at speed and to use this to make well evidenced recommendations and decisions
- The resilience and confidence to make difficult decisions under pressure, in conjunction with the Ofqual Board

The following are desirable criteria:

- Experience in the secondary or further education sector, and in particular an understanding of the role that qualifications play in an effective education and skills system and how they are developed and awarded; and/or
- Experience of working in a regulatory role



HOW TO APPLY

The closing date for applications is 11am on 12 February

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.

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 is received, your application will be "pre-assessed" before it is passed to the shortlisting Panel for consideration. You should be aware that in this situation, your application might not be considered in full by all the members of the Panel

This appointment comes under the scrutiny of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Sir William Shawcross, and his office. Please note that the successful candidate will be required to attend a pre-appointment hearing with the Education Select Committee: more information is provided on the next page.



The appointment will be on a full-time basis for a period of five years.

Ofqual has an interim Chief Regulator in post until 31 December 2024. We are aiming to have the new postholder in place by 1 January 2025.

This appointment is made by His Majesty the King by Order in Council - paragraph 2(1)(za) of Schedule 9 to the 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).

Remuneration

The post affords remuneration of up to £150,000 per annum.

Pension

The post is covered by the Civil Service Compensation Scheme and has access to the Civil Service Pension Scheme.

Location

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

Ofqual operates hybrid working arrangements between home and office working, with the expectation of attendance in the office, or visiting external stakeholders, to make up 40%-60% of working time.

For candidates not living within commuting distance of Coventry an expenses package may be available, subject to negotiation.

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.

Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance is 32.5 days, inclusive of civil service privilege days.

Sick Leave

Remuneration will be available for absences on sick leave. The paid entitlement to sick leave will be subject to length of service.

Pre-appointment scrutiny by the Education Select Committee

This role is subject to pre-appointment scrutiny by the Education Select Committee.

Pre-appointment scrutiny is an important part of the appointment process for some of the most significant public appointments made by Ministers. It is designed to provide an added level of scrutiny to verify that the recruitment meets the principles set out in the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Pre-appointment scrutiny has two parts.

First, information concerning the appointment and the Minister's preferred candidate will be shared with the relevant select committee. As part of this process you will need to be content for your name and your CV to be shared with the select committee as the Government's preferred candidate. You may also be required to complete a pre-appointment hearing questionnaire which could include, among other things:

- declarations of any relevant potential conflicts of interest
- what you see as the priorities and key risks for the organisation
- questions about how you would lead the organisation and work with stakeholders
- your commitment to standards in public life and how you would handle being in the public eye

Normally any information provided to the select committee by the Government or a candidate will be published.

Second, it is likely that the select committee will decide to call the Government's preferred candidate to a public hearing to answer questions relating to their suitability for the role. You would not be expected to have an in-depth technical knowledge of how the organisation works or an exact plan of what you would do in the role. However, you will be expected to provide a credible representation of your understanding of the work of the organisation and what your role in its future would be.

The pre-appointment hearing for this role will be confirmed in due course and is likely to be held in June or July 2024.

The Government is committed to making public appointments as accessible as possible so that no one is deterred from applying. The Department will provide support to you to help you prepare for the hearing and the clerks to the select committee will also be available to discuss with you how the hearing will run. You will also be supported by the Department in working with the select committee should you require any adjustment to enable you to participate fully in the hearing process.

More information

For more information about pre-appointment scrutiny, please see Cabinet Office Guidance: Pre-appointment scrutiny by House of Commons Select Committees: [Pre-appointment scrutiny by House of Commons select committees - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/pre-appointment-scrutiny-by-house-of-commons-select-committees)

The Liaison Committee also publishes guidelines to select committees for pre-appointment hearings: [Pre-appointment-hearing-guidelines.PDF \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/resources/guidance/pre-appointment-hearing-guidelines.pdf)

You may also find it helpful to review the Code of Conduct for board members of public bodies here: [Code of conduct for board members of public bodies](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies). This sets out the expectations which the Government places on members of public bodies.

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.



COMPLAINTS

If you would like to make a complaint regarding your application, please contact the Department for Education's Public Appointments Team 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/complaints)



**The Commissioner for
Public Appointments**