



Department  
for Education

**ofqual**

# Board Member Ofqual

Information pack



# WELCOME



## Thank you for your interest in becoming an Ofqual Board member.

This government is committed to breaking down barriers to opportunity for every child and young person.

A high-quality qualifications system plays a significant role in opening doors and shaping lives of learners, whatever their backgrounds. For young people in key stages 4 and 5, the qualifications they choose determine most of what they are taught so they are critical in supporting a broad and balanced curriculum. Gaining qualifications enhances employability and skills, provide access to further and higher education, enable economic mobility and development of skills, improve confidence and self-esteem, and help to break down social barriers. We are committed to looking for progress over time towards improving the coherence and flexibility of qualification pathways. This is a key part of our plans to put education back at the forefront of national life.

As the independent regulator of general and vocational and technical qualifications, Ofqual is responsible for maintaining standards and promoting public confidence in exams and qualifications. We are looking to recruit at least three high calibre individuals to the Ofqual Board.

High and rising standards for every child and young person are at the heart of the government's mission to break down barriers to opportunity and give every child the best life chances. The Curriculum and Assessment Review is looking to deliver an assessment system which captures the strengths of every child and young person and the breadth of curriculum, whilst maintaining the important role of examinations. Ofqual would play a pivotal role in enacting changes that may result from the review's recommendations, placing an increasing importance on innovative thinking, insight and research and strategic change.

At the same time, Ofqual is working on critical areas, including its approach to regulating the use of artificial intelligence in the qualifications sector, improving the wider resilience of the system, and carefully considering the opportunities and risks of onscreen exams. These areas are important to enabling the reliability, validity and security of qualifications.

To lead this period of change, we have recently recruited a new Chief Regulator and Chair. We are now seeking to appoint high calibre Board members who can offer support and challenge to Ofqual's executive. The Board members will be central to supporting executive decision making and providing strong strategic aims and standards. We are seeking applicants with significant experience and expertise to bring to Board discussions, who are committed to driving forward the work of the organisation.

Thank you for your interest and for taking the time to read this pack. If you have the skills and experience described below, I hope that you will 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.

Yours sincerely,

**Catherine McKinnell MP**  
Minister for School Standards



# ABOUT OFQUAL

**Ofqual is the independent, expert regulator of qualifications and assessments for England. Qualifications are a public asset that help individuals flourish and contribute to the growth of our society and economy.**

Ofqual's role is to be the steward of the valuable and dynamic qualifications system. We grow the value of that system by making sure qualifications are a reliable and trusted currency.

In total, Ofqual regulates over 10,000 qualifications – each with a specific purpose, designed to meet a particular need. That includes well-known qualifications such as GCSEs, A levels, and T Levels; Apprenticeship End Point Assessments; qualifications that are industry critical; and other qualifications that recognise achievement for millions of students each year in just about every field you can imagine.

Ofqual regulates around 250 organisations that provide those qualifications, as well as regulating national assessments taken in primary schools.

Ofqual plays an important role in supporting reform of qualifications while safeguarding standards and confidence. In this role, Ofqual is supporting the independent Curriculum and Assessment Review, which has been launched by the Government to review the existing national curriculum and assessment system in England. This includes providing advice to Government, as regulator and assessment expert body, on a wide range of issues relating to qualifications such as GCSEs and AS/A levels, as well as T Levels, vocational and technical qualifications more broadly, and the future qualifications landscape overall. Ofqual is also working with the sector to guide the adoption of new technologies in assessment.

As a non-ministerial department, Ofqual is accountable directly to Parliament for the discharge of its responsibilities: in particular to maintain standards and promote public confidence in qualifications, wherever they are designed to be used. In doing so it works appropriately with the Department, which sets the policy framework within which it operates.

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

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

## HOW OFQUAL WORKS

Ofqual's priorities include securing delivery of qualifications, maintaining standards and promoting public confidence in qualifications. Ofqual has a range of regulatory powers to enable it to achieve its objectives. However, Ofqual does not just enforce rules and hold awarding organisations to account, albeit this is a fundamental part of its role. Ofqual uses the extensive regulatory toolkit available to it to seek proactive improvement by taking a system-wide, long-term, risk-based perspective. Recently, it has invested time on stakeholder engagement, thoughtfully consulted on refreshing its rules, taken a co-regulatory approach to innovative emerging technologies, focused on building sector capacity and listened regularly to public opinion.

Ofqual's focus is also on improving how awarding works and the resilience of the qualifications system, safely managing the introduction of technology and new forms of assessment, improving its own regulatory craft, promoting the system-wide understanding of how qualifications work, and investing in data and system improvement.

Ofqual does this by playing an important role in implementing government-driven reform to curriculum and assessment. It also guides the adoption of new technologies in assessment. Ofqual continues to monitor and shape the qualifications market and builds confidence by increasing understanding of the range of qualifications on offer and how qualifications work. Ofqual uses its research and insight expertise to shape and contribute to key debates in education.

Ofqual's corporate services are key to enabling all that it needs to achieve. In particular, it has a strong track record of investing in the development of its people, as evidenced by the Civil Service People Survey results.

# ABOUT THE ROLE

**The Ofqual Board is the legal authority responsible for the regulation of qualifications in England. It provides leadership and direction to Ofqual, setting strategic aims, values and standards.**

The Board is the body charged with governing Ofqual's strategic direction. Board members collectively:

- work effectively with the Chair, Chief Regulator and Executive to establish the overall strategic direction for Ofqual
- monitor performance against agreed strategic objectives and targets
- ensure the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and in accordance with conditions relating to the use of public funds
- ensure high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times.

The Board has established 4 Committees and one Panel:

- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
- People, Resources and Finance Committee
- Technical Committee
- Strategic Enforcement Committee
- Enforcement Panel

Additional Board sub-groups are set up as required.

The Board consists of the Chair, between 7 and 12 ordinary members and the Chief Regulator (Chief Executive). The Chief Regulator is responsible for the day-to-day running of the organisation.

All Board members attend full Board meetings, and Board members are additionally on at least one of the Committees. The time commitment for the role is expected to be up to 20 days per year.

Board Strategy half or full days usually take place at least twice per year and are held in person either in Coventry or in London. The purpose of these meetings is to allow the Board to reflect more thoroughly on strategy and key issues and to develop its working practices.



# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

**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 underrepresented 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 which a genuinely diverse range of views can be expressed, without fear or favour.

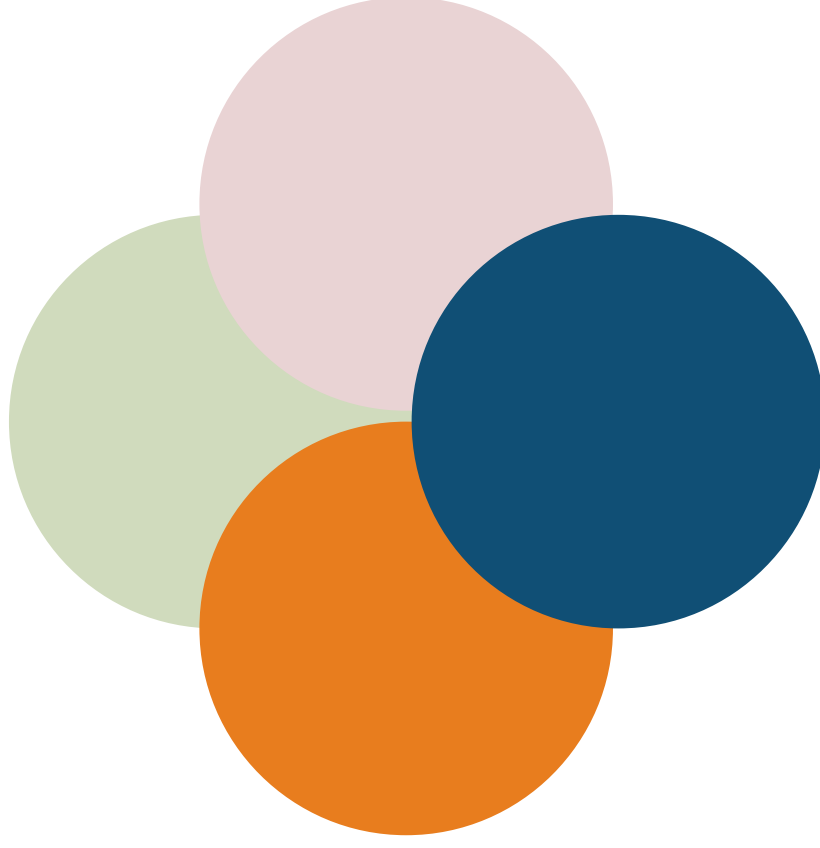
## **CHAMPIONING SOCIAL MOBILITY**

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're looking for experienced, strategic, pragmatic and collaborative individuals who are comfortable working in a rapidly challenging policy environment to join the Ofqual Board.

We are looking to recruit at least three high calibre individuals including specialists in finance and vocational and technical qualifications to join the Ofqual Board this year.

Board members need to be able both to see the bigger picture to shape the strategic direction of the organisation; and to provide relevant, insightful challenge and guidance to Ofqual's executive team.

You will be expected to support Ofqual's aims and objectives and act as ambassadors for the organisation. All candidates will be assessed against the essential criteria and if applying to the specialist positions, the additional criteria outlined below.

- The ability to build effective relationships at senior levels and/or between organisations; and
- Experience and knowledge which will contribute to the Ofqual Board. This could include, but is not restricted to, experience and understanding of the school sector, FE and/or vocational sectors, regulation and use of new technologies.

### Finance expert

- Candidates applying for the specialist role in finance will also need to demonstrate a successful track record of working at a senior level in finance in the public, private or voluntary sector.

## ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

Throughout the application and interview stages, candidates will need to demonstrate how they meet the essential criteria as listed below:

### Essential Criteria

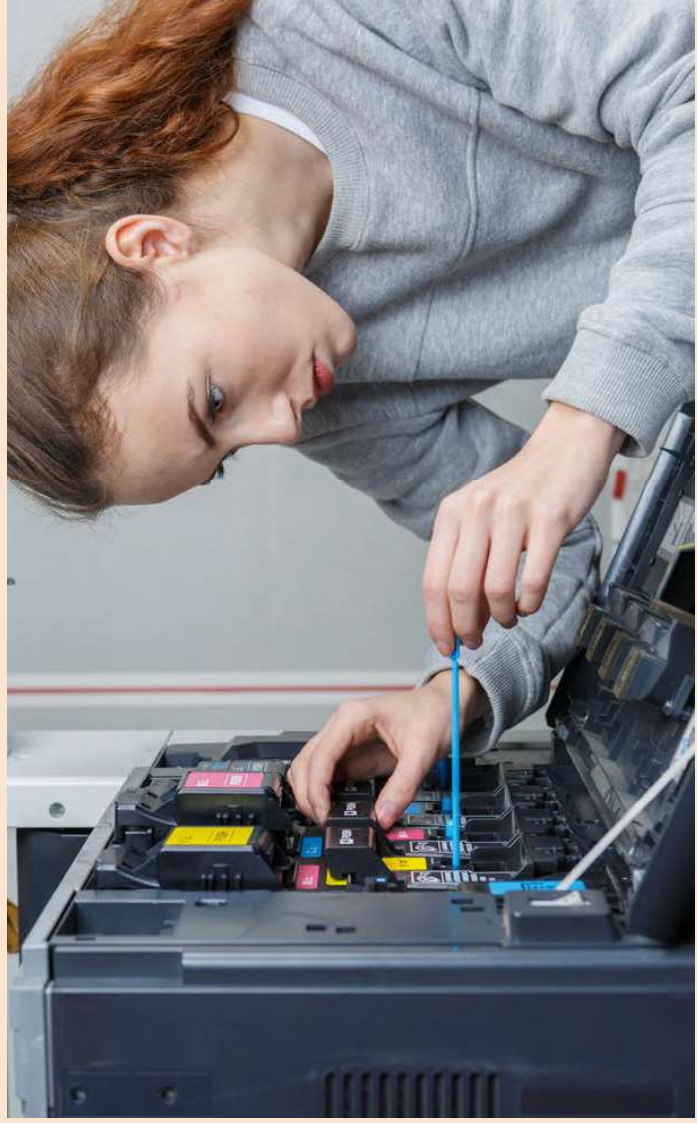
- The ability to think strategically and independently, bringing pragmatism and insight to a complex policy environment;
- The ability to drive forward the work of an organisation at non-executive level, with a successful track record in the public, voluntary or private sectors;
- A commitment to Ofqual as a regulator and its role;

## Vocational and Technical Qualifications expert

- Candidates applying for the Vocational and Technical Qualifications specialist role will also need to demonstrate a strong understanding of how vocational and technical qualifications support learners to succeed.

If we receive a large volume of applications, we will sift initially against the first generic criterion: *The ability to think strategically and independently, bringing pragmatism and insight to a complex policy environment, only.*

Successful candidates will then be moved to the main sift where the panel will be considering the evidence presented against all of the criteria.



# HOW TO APPLY

## The closing date for applications is Monday 17th March 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.

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.

If you wish to have an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact: [RecruitmentOfqual.BOARD@education.gov.uk](mailto:RecruitmentOfqual.BOARD@education.gov.uk)



The initial appointment will be for a period of up to three years, subject to performance. Candidates are expected to take up post from summer 2025.

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.

### TIME REQUIREMENT

The time commitment for the role is expected to be up to 20 days per year.

### REMUNERATION

Members are entitled to remuneration at £9,000 per year, and are also eligible to claim allowances, at rates set by Ofqual, for travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on Ofqual business.

### LOCATION

Ofqual is based at One Friargate, Coventry, CV1 2GN.

The successful candidate will be required to attend board and committee meetings in Coventry or London 4 times per year, and the role may require some national travel.

Strategy days take place twice a year and will be in person either in Coventry or in London. They may take place on the same day as board meetings.

### TRAINING

Induction will be provided by Ofqual on appointment.

### ELIGIBILITY

These appointments are made by the Secretary of State for Education and are subject to routine security clearance.

### 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 creditor.

### 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.



# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

# 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](mailto: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](mailto:publicappointments@csc.gov.uk)

Further information on complaints can be found on the Commissioner for Public Appointments' website: [publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk](http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk)