



Department  
for Education

**ofqual**

# Chief Regulator, Ofqual

Information pack



# WELCOME



**The Ofqual Chief Regulator is one of the central leadership roles in English education. Qualifications open doors and shape lives; and they are also important because they have a strong influence on what is taught in schools and colleges.**

As the independent regulator of general and vocational and technical qualifications, Ofqual is responsible for promoting and maintaining public confidence in qualifications. With the current interim Chief Regulator due to stand down from September 2021, we are looking for an exceptional individual to take on this exciting and high profile national role.

This will be a period of significant change for the qualifications system and for Ofqual as an organisation, and the new Chief Regulator will play a key role in shaping the system for years to come. The cancellation of summer exams due to the Covid-19 pandemic in both 2020 and 2021 has created unprecedented challenges both operationally and in terms of public confidence, which will place a premium in the coming years on innovative thinking, efficient delivery and effective public engagement and communications. At the same time, Ofqual is working with the Department 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.

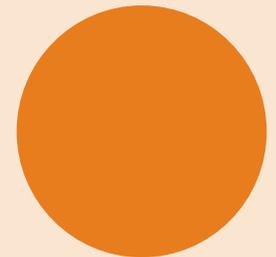
We are seeking to appoint an outstanding individual, ideally with experience at a senior level in either the education or regulatory sectors. You will need substantial leadership experience, a range of managerial skills including the management of organisational change and of complex programmes, and a high degree of personal integrity and resilience. You will also need the ability to inspire confidence across the education sector, awarding organisations, government ministers, Parliament, the public and Ofqual itself; and strong communication skills to build effective working relationships 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 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 this appointment, please contact Jacquie Spatcher, Head of Qualifications Division ([jacquie.spatcher@education.gov.uk](mailto:jacquie.spatcher@education.gov.uk)).

Yours sincerely,

**Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP**  
Secretary of State for Education



# ABOUT OFQUAL

**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 12,000 qualifications – each with a specific purpose, designed to meet a particular need. That includes well known qualifications such as GCSEs, A levels and BTECs; 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 the 160 organisations that provide those qualifications, as well as managing the expansion of Ofqual's role in external quality assurance of apprenticeships which includes the regulation of many new End Point Assessment (EPA) providers. As a non-Ministerial government department, 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 for Education, 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.

For further information about Ofqual please visit:  
[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual)

## 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 requirements to meet changing circumstances. It tests and makes expert judgements about compliance with its requirements, 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.

Each year there is far more that Ofqual could do than its resources allow. That means that it 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.



# ABOUT THE ROLE

**As Chief Regulator / Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Ofqual, you will be responsible for delivering on Ofqual's statutory duties – including to maintain standards and promote confidence in qualifications and assessments – taking account of the extraordinary circumstances created by the Covid-19 pandemic.**

Your main responsibilities will be to:

- Lead Ofqual in acting as the independent regulator of qualifications and assessments in England
- Represent Ofqual to the public, ministers, Parliament and the media
- Lead public debate in relation to the maintenance of both standards and confidence in examinations, qualifications and assessments
- Ensure that qualification reform programmes are delivered successfully, working closely with government and awarding organisations
- Be responsible for the overall leadership, management, organisation and staffing of Ofqual, building capacity and capability to respond to the particular challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic and restoring confidence in the organisation
- Be responsible for financial and other practices and procedures including conduct and discipline
- Promote the values underpinning Ofqual, through personal leadership and example
- Coordinate and implement policies and actions determined by the Board



# 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 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. In 2018 we launched a five year strategy to create a department where everyone is able to bring their whole self to work and where honesty, challenge and innovation are encouraged and valued. We are recognised by leading diversity organisations for promoting diversity in the workplace.

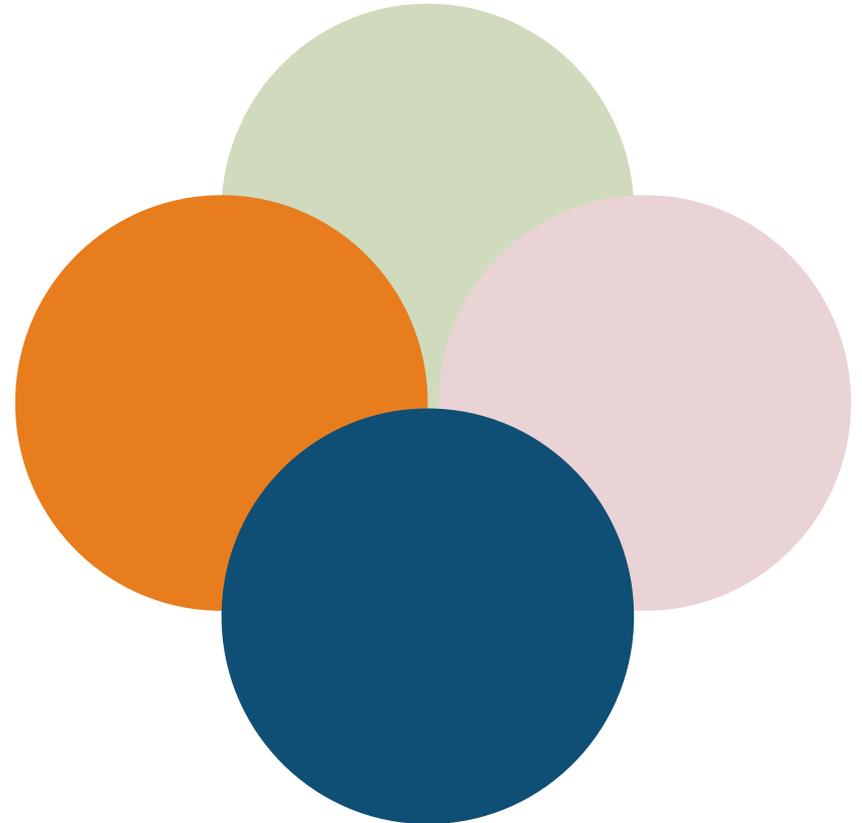
We want to ensure any appointee to the Department's arm's length bodies is committed to promoting diversity, in its broadest possible sense. This will include embedding a commitment to the principles of levelling up and championing opportunity for all across the organisation, helping to ensure that the 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**

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 role of the Chief Regulator set out in Part 7 of the [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) and Part 4 of the 2011 Act – [Education Act 2011](#) and with the work of Ofqual.

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

- 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 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 skilfully navigate the political landscape, and a good understanding of the government's educational reform programme, the role of the regulator in implementing the reforms and the particular challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic
- demonstrated ability to understand and process statistical information and academic research at speed
- 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: **5pm, Tuesday 16th March**

Information on the timetable for this campaign, selection process and the Advisory Assessment Panel can be found on the Centre for Public Appointments website [publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

Please submit the following documents by email to:

[PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk)

- 1. A personal statement, which demonstrates how you meet the key requirements for the role, as set out in the “who we’re looking for” section. No more than two sides of A4 in Arial font 12.**
- 2. A CV**
- 3. Candidate application form**
- 4. Diversity form**

Please include the vacancy title in the subject box and submit each application document as a separate attachment.

We are happy to accept applications in alternative formats from applicants who, for reasons of disability, may find it difficult to fill in our standard form. If you would like to have a chat with us about reasonable adjustments please contact us at: [PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk)

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, Peter Riddell, 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 on next page.



# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

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

Ofqual has an interim Chief Regulator in post until mid-September 2021. We are aiming to have the new postholder in place by early September, to allow for a short handover period.

This appointment is made by Her Majesty the Queen 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 next page).

## Remuneration

The post affords remuneration of up to £135,000.

## 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, Earlsdon Park, CV1 3BH.

Ofqual staff are currently predominantly working from home due to Covid-19 and Ofqual is reviewing its long-term position on home/office working. It is likely that, longer term, the successful candidate can expect to be required to be in the office for a minimum of two days per week.

## Disqualification from appointment

There are circumstances in which an individual will not be considered for appointment. They include:

- people who have received a prison sentence or suspended
- sentence of three months or more in the last five years;
- people who are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order
- or interim order;
- in certain circumstances, those who have had an earlier term of appointment to another public body terminated;

- anyone who is under a disqualification order under the
- Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; and
- anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity.

## Annual Leave

The annual leave allowance is 40.5 days inclusive of 8 bank holidays and 2.5 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 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 Education 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.

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 Education 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 Education 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](#)**

The Liaison Committee also publishes guidelines to select committees for pre-appointment hearings: **[old.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/liaison/Pre-Appointment-Hearings-Revised-Guidelines-17-19.pdf](#)**

You may also find it helpful to review the Code of Conduct for board members of public bodies here: **[www.gov.uk/government/publications/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](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 Appointment's website **[publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk](http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk)**