

**NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO RESTRICT
PRIORITY QUALIFICATIONS MADE UNDER
SECTION 14 OF THE QUALIFICATIONS WALES
ACT 2015**



23 February 2021

Advanced Skills BaccaLaureate Wales (Level 3)

This is a notice of our intention to restrict the number of forms of a qualification.

Qualifications Wales is required under Section 14 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015 ("The Act") to notify each recognised awarding body and any other person that Qualifications Wales considers might reasonably be expected to have an interest in the proposal to restrict.

The subject, rationale, supporting evidence and arrangements for the proposed restriction can be found below.

Qualifications Wales will consider representations on this proposal received by 6 April 2021 prior to deciding to issue a determination of restriction.

The qualification we intend to restrict:

Qualifications Wales proposes to restrict the following qualification* to **one form**:

Advanced Skills BaccaLaureate Wales (level 3)

* Qualifications Wales may vary the title and/or include title endorsements to the qualification description prior to the publication of Approval Criteria.

The potential impact:

Should we proceed to restrict to one form of this qualification, following consideration of any representations we receive to this notice, the following qualification/s would be impacted by the proposed restriction:

- Advanced Welsh BaccaLaureate

Qualifications Wales

Q2 Building, Pencarn Lane
Imperial Park,
Newport
NP10 8AR
☎ 01633 373 222



www.qualificationswales.org

Cymwysterau Cymru

Adeilad Q2, Lôn Pencarn
Parc Imperial,
Casnewydd
NP10 8AR
☎ 01633 373 222

- Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Bacculaureate)

Other qualifications may be affected, specifically those that meet the following description:

Any level 3 qualification of the same or similar size (360 GLH) with the primary purpose of developing and assessing the following skills:

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving;
- Creativity and Innovation;
- Personal Effectiveness; and
- Planning and Organising.

Any qualification that is deemed by us to be the same or similar to the **Advanced Skills Bacculaureate Wales (level 3)** will be considered for withdrawal of approval or revocation of designation. Following this notice, if we decide to proceed with the restriction, we will write to awarding bodies in due course with information about identifying and determining same or similar qualifications.

Should we proceed with the restriction, awarding bodies (or other interested parties) will be able to provide justification as to why certain qualifications should not be listed or to suggest further qualifications that should be added.

Rationale for the proposed restriction:

In March 2016, we published a report, [‘Review of the implementation of the new Welsh Bacculaureate from September 2015’](#), which set out to investigate issues raised by stakeholders in the initial implementation stages of a newly introduced suite of [Skills Challenge Certificate \(SCC\) qualifications and related Welsh Bacculaureate \(Bacc\)](#). We concluded that a review of the assessment and structure of the SCC, and its place within the Welsh Bacc, should be conducted.

Consequently, in April 2018 we published a report [‘A review of the design and assessment model of the Skills Challenge Certificate, and its place within the Welsh Bacculaureate’](#), following an independent review conducted by Wavehill Ltd, in partnership with the UCL’s Institute of Education.

The review found that the Skills Challenge Certificate is a worthwhile qualification that provides learners with valuable opportunities to gain real-life skills and to develop their interests by choosing areas of study that are relevant to them. However, it also made recommendations to address shortcomings, for example regarding complexity, manageability and repetition.

We have worked with a wide range of stakeholders to develop proposals for a new qualification and we [consulted](#) in autumn 2020 on proposals to:

- discontinue the overarching Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate (Welsh Bacc) framework allowing a focus on the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) as a standalone qualification; and
- develop a new Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) qualification.

The restriction is proposed in furtherance of our Principal Aims, and to:

- Enable us to exercise choice between different awarding bodies through a process of fair and open competition, to identify an awarding body to take forward the development of this qualification;
- Avoid inconsistency between different forms of the same qualification, enabling all learners to be assessed using the same assessment methodology, thereby ensuring greater consistency; and to
- Support the economic viability for awarding bodies to develop such qualifications for Wales.

This process of restriction and commissioning also enables us to:

- Prescribe requirements including Welsh-medium provision and professional development.
- Ensure that communication about, and awareness raising in relation to, the qualification is easier for learners, employers and centres to understand.

Supporting evidence for the proposed restriction:

Page 6 of our Priority Qualifications List and Restricted Priority Qualifications Policy, states that Priority qualifications may be restricted if Qualifications Wales is satisfied that it is desirable to do so, having regard to the principal aims and the objectives to:

- avoid inconsistency between different forms of the same qualification (by reference to the level of attainment indicated by different forms of the same qualification, or otherwise); and
- enable Qualifications Wales to exercise a choice between different awarding bodies or different forms of qualification as outlined under section 14(4) of the Act.

Given that the development of the new qualification follows various high-profile reviews, maintaining public confidence is a crucial consideration and an important aspect of that is the need to avoid inconsistency between different forms of the same qualification. In particular, the specific nature of this qualification's assessment means that monitoring and maintaining standards would be complex (and costly) to Qualifications Wales and awarding bodies if more than one awarding body were to offer the qualification, as could be the case with a market-led approach. Any perceived or actual failure in this regard (e.g. lack of comparability etc) would be particularly damaging reputationally in any circumstances, but more so in this instance, given that this qualification is being developed considering various reviews.

Page 7 of the Priority Qualifications List and Restricted Priority Qualifications Policy, states that a 'Restriction would support the economic viability for awarding bodies to develop such qualifications for Wales'. We consider this to be a factor in this case as we anticipate that development and implementation costs will be significant, whilst income is less predictable. For example, we will expect all resources, centre training and assessments to be made available in Welsh and English. Consequently, we are proposing a seven-year restriction period.

In summary Qualifications Wales is satisfied that, having regard to the principal aims in the Qualifications Wales Act 2015, it is desirable to restrict the number of forms of this qualification taken by learners on publicly funded courses to a maximum of one.

Arrangements for the proposed restriction:

Before making a determination to restrict Qualifications Wales must consider any representations made in respect of the notice of intention to restrict. Interested parties have until **6 April 2021**, in which to make representations in response to this notification to restrict.

Representations should be made to skilledforthefuture@qualificationswales.org

Proposed restriction:	To restrict the qualification to one form that is provided by a single service provider.
Proposed restriction method:	Commissioning route
Proposed restriction period:	7 years from first teaching.
Deadline for representations on the proposed restriction:	6 April 2021

Indicative high-level timescales:

Activities	Indicative Dates
Pre-tender engagement	April / May 2021
Issue contract notice	May / June 2021
Award contract	October 2021
AB develops qualification	October 2021 – March 2022
Qualification goes through QW approval process	April 2022 – August 2022
First teaching	September 2023
Operational end date	31 August 2030
Certification end date	31 August 2032