



20 February 2024

Dear Responsible Officer,

Consultation on our proposed approach to designating 14-16 qualifications

In January, we wrote to you following publication of our [Statement of Policy Intent on the New National 14-16 Qualifications](#), which describes our intended approach and rationale for determining which qualifications will be made available as part of the new 14-16 qualification offer from September 2025.

We confirmed that this Statement of Policy Intent will form the basis for our revised Designation Policy, which would be subject to consultation.

Today, we have [launched our consultation](#) on our proposed approach to designating 14-16 qualifications, and have published a draft revised Designation Policy.

Consultation overview

With a new curriculum being taught in schools, we have published requirements for new approved [National 14-16 Qualifications](#). These qualifications will meet our guiding principles for all publicly funded 14-16 qualifications and will provide an inclusive, bilingual suite of qualifications from which centres can choose to offer their learners.

Guiding principles for all publicly funded qualifications for 14-16-year-olds

Qualifications within the new 14-16 offer will need to:

- *relate to, and support, the aims and purposes of the new curriculum;*
- *be available in Cymraeg ("Welsh") and English, and*
- *contribute to a coherent and inclusive range of qualifications that meets the needs of all learners.*

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As new approved National Qualifications are taught from 2025, they will replace the majority of other publicly funded pre-16 qualifications currently available.

We will therefore only designate qualifications for 14-16-year-olds in limited exceptional circumstances.

Our policy intent is that we will only designate qualifications that meet all of our guiding principles and do not undermine approved National 14-16 Qualifications.

Where a qualification does not meet our guiding principles and to reduce the risk of removing any qualifications that cater to the needs of a small minority of learners, we will allow awarding bodies to apply for an exemption to our guiding principles on the basis that it is able to meet a limited set of criteria.

Have your say

We want to hear your views on our proposed exemption criteria for designation of 14-16 qualifications, as well as the factors and evidence that we should consider when deciding to make exemptions to our guiding principles.

We also want to hear your views on any yet unidentified impacts of our broader approach to designation.

Find out more by reading our consultation document, revised Designation Policy and Rules, and Integrated Impact Assessment, available on our [engagement HQ platform](#).

We encourage you to respond formally to our proposals as your views are important to us and will help to inform our decisions. Have your say by completing [our short consultation survey](#).

Our consultation will run for a period of 12 weeks, closing on Tuesday, 14 May 2024.

If you have any queries on the consultation, please contact us on policy@qualifications.wales.

Yours sincerely,



Jo Richards,

Executive Director for Regulation