



By email to Responsible Officers

July 2018

Dear Responsible Officer,

We have published a revised Priority Qualifications List (PQL), which reflects the outcome of our recent consultation on proposals for reform following our Sector Review of qualifications and the qualification system for Construction and the Built Environment.

The report on that review, *Building the Future*, was published on 8 February 2018 together with a consultation on options for reform. The consultation closed on 13 April and we received 33 responses. Having considered these responses, which were broadly supportive of our preferred proposals, we are now intending to proceed with these preferred proposals. Please see Annex A of the [PQL and Forward Look](#) document on our website for further information.

In respect of our proposals for qualifications taught mainly in schools, we propose to develop and publish approval criteria for a level 1/2 qualification, likely to be a GCSE and a level 3 qualification, likely to be an GCE A level. We anticipate that these qualifications will retain a strong practical element, similar to that in qualifications currently available. We believe this to be the best way to encourage young people to gain an understanding of the Construction sector at an earlier age and that it will provide clearer pathways for learners hoping to gain employment in this sector, both through apprenticeships and through construction-related higher education.

We have therefore added these qualifications to the 'forward look' of the PQL and will add the qualifications formally to the list once we have developed the approval criteria. It will then be open to awarding bodies to submit specifications for approval against that criteria.

In respect of our proposals for qualifications taught mainly in Further Education and on Apprenticeships, we are proposing to commission new qualifications for first teaching from September 2021 as set listed (with provisional titles) below:

- Foundation qualification in Construction
- Foundation qualification in Building Services
- Progression qualification in Construction
- Progression qualification in Building Services
- Apprenticeship qualification for Construction
- Apprenticeship qualification for Building Services

Each of the above qualifications is likely to be awarded with trade-specific endorsements to enable learners to progress and qualify in their chosen trade.

The Priority Qualifications List now includes a Notification of a Proposal to Restrict the above qualifications with the intention of them being available for first teaching in September 2021. The revised PQL, including the Notification of a Proposal to Restrict, can be found on our [website](#).

The Notification of a Proposal to Restrict initiates a period within which interested parties can make representations to us - these must be made by 5pm on **3 August 2018**. It is our current intention, subject to representations, to select one awarding body using a fair and open competitive process, which will commence in July 2019 if, following representations, we chose to continue with our Proposal to Restrict.

Section 30(4) of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015 states that the designation of a sufficiently similar qualification ceases to have effect following the approval of a restricted qualification. Paragraph 25 of our Restricted Priority Qualifications policy says: 'Qualifications Wales will not designate any form of a qualification that is subject to a restriction or which in our judgement is the same or similar in purpose to a restricted priority qualification, particularly where a qualification could be chosen as an alternative to a restricted priority qualification'. The scope of our Proposed Restriction includes those qualifications in the bulleted list on page 1 above.

The proposed restriction would only apply in respect of the eligibility of qualifications for use on publicly funded programmes of learning in Wales.

In identifying the impact of the Proposed Restriction we have used the following process to establish an indicative list of existing designated qualifications that may be affected, should the relevant awarding body have intended to offer the qualification beyond August 2021:

- extracted a list of designated qualifications from the Qualifications in Wales (QiW) database principally drawn from those in sub-sector 5.1 Architecture, 5.2 Building and Construction, 5.3 Urban, Rural and Regional Planning and other qualifications with relevant key words.
- removed those that were primarily linked to Health and Safety or other tangential subjects
- removed those at level 1 and level 1 / 2 or higher than level 3
- removed those which are primarily targeted at learners wishing to progress to higher education
- removed those which we identified as being used primarily for continuing professional development purposes for adult learners.

This list has been developed using our best endeavours, but is not exhaustive and will be reviewed regularly, in particular following any representations made to us by 5pm on **3 August 2018**. If the list contains qualifications that you believe should not be affected, or if you believe that the list has omitted a qualification, then please notify us by making a representation to [constructionreview@qualificationswales.org](mailto:constructionreview@qualificationswales.org) before the deadline.

If we continue with our Proposal to Restrict, then we will publish a revised list in Autumn 2018 and will make clear at that point how awarding bodies can advise us of further amendments.

Since we began the Sector Review, we have been imposing limited operational end dates on all construction-related qualifications with a last date of 31 August 2020. Should the restriction go ahead, awarding bodies may apply to have this date extended for a further year. Qualifications on the final list would be able to have:

- Operational End Dates set at 31 August 2021. No new learners can register/enter for a qualification after this date. However, existing candidates would be allowed to complete the qualification until the Certification End Date.
- Certification End Dates set at 31 August 2023. A qualification has ended after this date. No learners will be awarded the qualification and no school or college will receive public funding to teach it after this date. We would liaise with you about the process for doing this.

We will set out further detail regarding the process, including how an awarding body can appeal against a qualification being listed if we publish a Determination to Restrict.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip Blaker', written in a cursive style.

Philip Blaker

Chief Executive

Qualifications Wales