

Regulatory Glossary of Terms



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Qualifications are technical by nature. To make it a little clearer, here's a guide to the most commonly used terms.

Term / Phrase	Definition
A level	General Certificate of Education Advanced Level, also known as a GCE A level. Qualifications taken after GCSEs in a range of subjects, usually taken at age 16-18 and typically a two-year course of study. They are used as a basis for admissions to higher education, further training or entry into employment.
Advanced Subsidiary (AS)	Advanced Subsidiary Level qualification. A qualification that forms the first part of an A level qualification. It may be taken as a free-standing qualification. In Wales and Northern Ireland, it contributes to the A level result. In England, AS qualifications cannot contribute to A levels.
Adverse effect	For the purposes of our Standard Conditions of Recognition, an act, omission, event, incident, or circumstance has an adverse effect if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) gives rise to prejudice to learners or persons likely to become learners; or (b) adversely affects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the ability of the awarding body to undertake the development, delivery or award of qualifications in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition; (ii) the standards of qualifications which the awarding body makes available or proposes to make available; or (iii) public confidence in qualifications and/or the Welsh qualification system.
Approval	Approval is a process designed to check that qualifications meet qualification-specific approval criteria before being made available to learners. The process by which we approve qualifications is set out in Part 4 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Approval criteria	The criteria which we apply when deciding whether to approve a form of a qualification, and published in accordance with section 20 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Approved qualifications	Regulated qualifications eligible for use on publicly funded programmes of learning that we have approved under Part 4 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015. Approved qualifications are only

	awarded in Wales, and will have satisfied our robust approval criteria that ensure they are designed to meet the needs of learners in Wales. Approved qualifications will have been allocated an identified approval number, and are linked to qualifications on the Priority Qualification List (PQL).
Assessment	A method of evaluating, testing, measuring and documenting the acquisition of specific areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding of learners.
Assessment arrangements	Arrangements for assessing relevant skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to the qualification, as defined in section 57 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Assessor	A person who undertakes marking or the review of marking using a particular set of criteria to make judgements as to the level of attainment a learner has demonstrated in an assessment, as defined in Section J of the Standard Conditions of Recognition.
Awarding Body	An organisation that develops qualifications, specifies and monitors assessments and issues awards to learners, formally recognising the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences), following an assessment and validation procedure. In other parts of the UK these are known as Awarding Organisations or Exam Boards.
Centre	A body undertaking the delivery of an assessment (and potentially other activities) to learners on behalf of an awarding body. Centres are typically educational institutions, training providers, or employers.
Compliance	To be compliant an awarding body must meet its Conditions of Recognition and other regulatory requirements set by Qualifications Wales.
Conditions of Approval	All conditions of approval to which an approved qualification is subject to, as imposed under section 22 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Conditions of Recognition	All conditions to which an awarding body's recognition is subject (including Standard Conditions imposed under Schedule 3 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015).
Designated Qualifications	Regulated qualifications that are designated by us as eligible for use on publicly funded programmes of learning for learners under the

	age of 19, as defined under section 29 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015. We take a number of matters into account when determining whether to designate qualifications.
Designation/ Approval Certification End Date	The end of the designation/approval period and the final date a learner can be certificated for a qualification that is eligible for use on publicly funded programmes of learning for learners under 19; this includes resits.
Designation/ Approval Period	The time between the Designation/Approval Start Date and the Designation/Approval Certification End Date.
Designation/ Approval Start Date	The start of the designation/approval period and the first date that a learner can start a course leading to a qualification that is eligible for use on publicly funded programmes of learning for learners under the age of 19.
GCSEs	General Certificates of Secondary Education are available in a wide range of subjects. GCSEs are the main Level 1 and Level 2 general qualifications at age 14-16 in Wales. They can be used as a basis for progression into further and higher levels study or training, or direct entry into employment.
General Qualification (GQ)	Qualifications that are taken typically by learners in school or college as part of their statutory or further education. This includes GCSEs, AS and A levels and other qualifications that share some of the features common to GCSEs and A levels. WJEC is the main provider of these qualifications in Wales, although some are also offered by other awarding bodies.
General recognition criteria	Criteria that are set and published by us for the purposes of general recognition of an awarding body, in accordance with subsection 5(1) of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Learner(s)	This is a defined term in the Conditions of Recognition and also used in other regulatory documents to mean the following: A person who is seeking to obtain, or who might reasonably be expected to seek to obtain, qualifications.
Maintenance of Standards	We oversee the process by which awarding bodies set and maintain appropriate standards in GCSEs, A levels and similar qualifications from one awarding series to the next. For qualifications that are regulated alongside other UK qualifications regulators, we work closely with them to agree common standards.

Monitoring	Activities that we carry out to review the quality of an awarding body's systems, processes and/or qualifications.
Other regulated qualifications	There are three types of regulated qualifications – Approved, Designated and Other. Other regulated qualifications are qualifications offered in Wales by recognised awarding bodies, which have not been designated or approved by us, and which awarding bodies have not surrendered or exempted from the scope of their recognition.
Principal Aims	The two principal aims of Qualifications Wales, listed in subsection 3(1) of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that qualifications, and the Welsh qualification system, are effective for meeting the reasonable needs of learners in Wales; and • promoting public confidence in qualifications and in the Welsh qualification system.
Priority Qualification	A qualification included on the Priority Qualifications List, or a qualification that is of a description included on the list, as defined in subsection 13(6) of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Priority Qualifications List	A list of qualifications for priority approval, jointly prepared by Qualifications Wales and the Welsh Ministers in accordance with subsection 13(1) of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Qualification	An award made by an awarding body to demonstrate a learner's achievement of competence. In the context of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015, it specifically refers to academic or vocational qualifications awarded in Wales, other than a foundation degree, first degree or degree at a higher level, as defined in section 56 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Qualification specific recognition criteria	Criteria set and published by us to be applied for the purposes of qualification specific recognition of an awarding body, in accordance with subsection 6(1) of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Qualifications in Wales (QiW)	The information technology system Qualifications in Wales (QiW) provided by Qualifications Wales is a comprehensive source of information on approved, designated and other regulated qualifications that are available to learners in Wales.

Qualifications Regulator	An organisation which monitors and maintains standards for external qualifications, for example, Qualifications Wales, Ofqual (in England), CCEA (in Northern Ireland) and SQA (in Scotland).
Qualifications Wales Act 2015	The Qualifications Wales Act 2015 was passed by the then National Assembly for Wales in August 2015 and established Qualifications Wales. The Act sets out, amongst other things, our principal aims, responsibilities and powers.
Recognised Awarding Body	An awarding body that is recognised by us to award qualifications in Wales, in accordance with Part 3 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015. Where we refer to an “awarding body”, this normally refers to a recognised awarding body.
Recognition	To offer regulated qualifications in Wales, an awarding body must be recognised by us. Awarding bodies need to comply with our recognition criteria and apply for recognition. Recognition includes general recognition and qualification specific recognition.
Recognition Criteria	Criteria set and published by us in accordance with sections 5 and 6 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015, which awarding bodies must meet in order to be recognised by us. Recognition criteria include general recognition criteria and qualification specific recognition criteria.
Regulated Qualifications	All non-degree qualifications (whether approved, designated or other regulated) that are offered for award by an awarding body recognised by us (unless either an awarding body has surrendered its recognition in respect of that qualification, or if an awarding body excluded that qualification from the scope of its recognition by notifying Welsh Government prior to 21 September 2015). Qualifications Wales can also revoke qualifications.
Regulation End Date	The final date Qualifications Wales would regulate the qualification.
Regulatory document	As defined for the purposes of our Standard Conditions of Recognition, a regulatory document, or part of a regulatory document, which features in a document entitled the ‘Regulatory Document List’, which may be published by us.
Regulatory Impact	RIAs are tools to assess the potential impact of proposed regulatory action on stakeholders and includes analysis of an option of not taking any further regulatory action/ interventions. The assessment

Assessment (RIA)	considers the adverse effects, costs, benefits and risks to help inform our decision making.
Responsible Officer	An individual appointed to act as an awarding body's authoritative point of contact for Qualifications Wales.
Restricted Priority Qualification	A priority qualification for which we have specified that we will only approve a maximum specified number of forms of the qualification (which may be one or more), for a period of time, in accordance with section 14 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.
Restriction	A limit on the number of forms of a priority qualification that we have determined we will approve.
Sector Review	A review to investigate the effectiveness of qualifications and the qualification system usually within a specific employment sector.
Senedd Cymru/ Welsh Parliament	<p>The democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.</p> <p>Qualifications Wales is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body, independent of government, and is accountable to the Senedd Cymru/ Welsh Parliament.</p>
Standard Conditions of Recognition (SCoR)	<p>The Standard Conditions of Recognition contain the rules that all awarding bodies and their qualifications must meet when offering qualifications to learners in Wales. All regulated awarding bodies have a legal requirement to comply with these rules on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>In addition to these overarching conditions, we have powers to impose conditions for specific qualifications, descriptions of qualifications and awarding bodies.</p>
Statement of Compliance (SoC)	An annual statement that all recognised awarding bodies are required to submit to us about their assessment of their level of compliance with the Standard Conditions of Recognition.
Typical Designation/ Approval Final Start Date	The final date that a learner can start a course leading to a qualification that is eligible for use on publicly funded programmes of learning for learners under the age of 19, based on a typical delivery model.

Vocational Qualification (VQ)	Qualifications that are awarded and certificated by an awarding body, taken by learners from the age of 14 upwards, and which assess knowledge, understanding and/or skills that relate explicitly to the world of work.
Welsh-medium qualifications	Qualifications where any assessment to be completed by a learner is made available to them in Welsh. This means every part of the assessment, such as units or components, and in whichever format, whether paper or digital.
Welsh qualification system	The system, taken as a whole, by which qualifications are awarded to persons assessed wholly or mainly in Wales for this purpose, as defined in subsection 3(3) of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.