

Minutes

AG/23/M1

Qualifications Advisory Group

Held on Tuesday 28 virtually through MS Teams

Meeting scheduled to start at 10:30 until 12:30

Chair:	Amy Smith	Nottingham Trent University
Attendees:	Amy Starling Andrew Shield Bethany Hughes Elaine Carlile Donna Finlay Heidi Page Joanna Brown Lisa Littlewood Liz Wyman Lizzie Gauntlett Martha Charles Martin Smith Sheila Dunn	Cardiff University SQA Ofqual Qualification Wales CCEA The University of Manchester Milton Keynes College Bournside school and sixth form college Association of College FAB University of Huddersfield Ulster University SCQF Partnership
Apologies:	Marian Curran Mike Upton	St Brendan's Sixth Form College, Bristol London Metropolitan University
UCAS in Attendance:	Laura Hawkins Jon Brook Ben Jordan	Customer Engagement Co-Ordinator Service Delivery Partner (Qualifications) Head of Policy
Presenting:	Andy Frampton Amelia Brennan	Service Delivery Manager Department of Education
Observing:	James O'Brien Michael Martin	Data Collections Support Officer Service Delivery Manager

Action

A3/20/01 Welcome and apologies

The Group was welcomed to the meeting and the apologies were noted. The Group introduced themselves.

A3/20/02 Minutes and action log from previous meeting

The minutes were approved as a correct and accurate reflection of the last meeting.

All open actions from the log were closed.

A3/20/03 Reshaping the Qualifications information Profiles Update

In 2021, UCAS held a consultation with HE providers on whether they should remove QIPs. There was a desire for them to be kept as they were considered valuable, despite the duplication of content found at other sources. This led to the reshaping of the profiles to ensure removal of duplicated/inaccurate content, and better maintenance. The group are invited to offer their opinions on them.

Current content in UK QIP

UCAS are looking to reduce the number of fields, especially in easily ready information available elsewhere.

New UK QIPs template will include qualification title; purpose; grading and assessment; key issues to HE. UCAS will work more closely with awarding bodies moving forwards to ensure the information is kept up to date. The complete qualification information offering for UK Level 3/SCQF level 6 (Level 2 will be removed) will be UK QIPs and the Tariff Tables, which will remain the same.

UCAS are looking to focus on how to have an active process for maintaining the QIPs. Webform and webpage are going to be published on ucas.com to allow AOs to easily submit qualification information to UCAS and ensure communication to AOs ahead of each cycle to remind them to review and update QIPs.

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The group have been asked to review the QIPs portal and submit feedback to UCAS by 18th May (qualsinfo@ucas.ac.uk).

There will be a 'Discovering UCAS' day in May 2023 for awarding bodies to attend.

SCQF7 QIPs may be included later.

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Could UCAS provide data on the proportion of students who take a qualification that maybe is unfamiliar to a particular provider, and progress to higher education. In regard to the key issues section, it would be helpful for UCAS to inform where the information is coming from. UCAS will be strengthening their relationship with awarding bodies.

A3/20/04 Operational Update

Andy Frampton delivered an Operational update on embargo and C&C.

Insights from Jan EXCD 2023.

- Total number of applicants is down on 2022 (-2.3%)
- UK 18-year-olds applying were down (-1.8%)
- Continuation of growth of international applicants (+3.1%)
- Strong variations by subject

Computing (+9.6%), Law (+2.1%), Nursing (-18.6%), Education (-15.6%)

UCAS have noted slower offer making from providers, and over recruitment in 2022 so offer making was faced with more caution this cycle. The applicants have reverted to

pre-pandemic.

Applicants can now add an extra option in their application.

Embargo dates

Dates for the 2023 embargo were confirmed as:

- SQA Embargo begins 18:00 Monday 31 July and ends 09:00 Tuesday 8 August
- JCQ Embargo begins 14:00 Friday 11 August and ends 08:00 Thursday 17 August.

Results Embargo

Primary Correspondent (PC) training to be made available earlier than previous years. PC training will focus on preparation for the Embargo e.g. creating effective internal embargo 'working groups'. New suite of resources for PCs for awarding organisations interested in taking the training, and vendors who supply student record systems.

UCAS will be hosting a webinar for embargo looking at how they can support best practice. The Pilot scheme for Providers to host the All-Staff Training on their own LMS QAG107 platform. The group asked when the technical spec for the LMS option was going to be AF forwarded.

Changes for C&C 2023

Clearing and Decline my Place will open at 13:00 on JCQ Results Day. Reasons for Delayed Confirmation decisions via XML-Link and web-link products. UCAS will welcome feedback regarding the impact of the change. Applicants will view a unique static page on UCAS for both results days, displaying confirmation of status and if applicable next steps. The applicant can see the reason for the non-decision and encourage them to complete any outstanding actions. This is an optional tool but encouraged by UCAS to utilise.

There will be a static page for applicants to log into. A snapshot of each applicant's status overnight leading up to results day instead of a live sight. Any recorded decisions overnight won't be updated.

Follow up questions

UCAS will be working with all awarding bodies and qualifications to review data sharing and process between AOs and UCAS. There will be a guide from Ofqual regarding data sharing. UCAS are conversing with their communications teams too. UCAS are looking to have an automatic un-picking process rather than having to ask permission.

The Irish Leaving Certificate (ILC) will be issued earlier than September, around the same time as GCSE results, but not as early as the beginning of August. UCAS may not get confirmation on this until May / June.

Every awarding organisation uses a different system when recording missing grades, so it isn't easy for UCAS to communicate the outstanding ones.

A3/20/05 Department of Education Update

Amelia delivered an update on changes to the way T-Levels will be allocated Tariff points from summer 2023. The overall 2019 tariff allocation will remain for full

programme students, but there will be a new structure for partial achievement.

T Levels Tariff Allocation update

Overall T Level Grade – Pass / Merit / Distinction / Distinction*

Core Graded A*-E – 20-50% of the TQ

Occupational Specialism Graded Pass / Merit / Distinction / Distinction – 50-80% of the TQ

From summer 2023, learners who achieve only their Core Component or Occupational Specialism (+ completion of the Industry Placement) will be eligible to receive a number of Tariff points, which are derived as a percentage of the points allocated to the full T Level. These partial achievement points are aligned to the weighting of the component parts of the T Level.

There are two separate forms of certification. Students that complete their full level achieve their level certificate and students that only partially attain their T level will achieve a statement of achievement. These are sent to colleges in the same way the A-level certificates are. This will be split into all components of the course so each achievement and failed parts will be included. The universities will see the core, they'll see the occupational specialism and they'll see if they've completed the industry placement.

There were concerns raised by the group regarding industry placement not being included within the tariff allocation.

Webinars for both providers and HE providers will be arranged nearer the time. Group members are encouraged to contact amelia1.brennan@education.gov.uk with anything else they may wish to flag.

A3/20/06 Round Table

Awarding sector bodies delivered their updates.

SQA

They are due to revert to full course specifications. They have a small number of subjects where the evidence from awarding pointed to an improvement in the assessment process and regime because of the modifications. So those subjects are currently going through an internal approval process to retain the assessments. The announcement is expected to be made around late March early April.

Ofqual

Action plan published on 16 December 2022 [Action Plan: Vocational and Technical Qualification results 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

They are currently consulting on Level 2 and below qualifications which are aimed at students going directly into employment or preparation for employment, and level 2 qualifications for the T level transition program. Those consultations are both still open. Anyone who is interested in having an input is encouraged to respond and can do here - [Consultation on regulating level 1 and 2 qualifications designed to lead to employment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

They are expecting to consult on the remaining level 2 and below qualifications around mid-March, going forward for 12 weeks. T level consultation is upcoming.

Protecting students from late results will include new results deadline, by which point all those eligible candidate results be available to centers and a VTQ information hub bringing together all the information on deadlines and requirements into one place. An associated consultation of the deadline and associate all the procedures linked into that close on 20th of February. Ofqual are analysing the results now and drafting a public statement

[Regulating level 2 qualifications supporting progression to T Levels - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/regulating-level-2-qualifications-supporting-progression-to-t-levels)

CCEA

CCEA are looking to continue the journey back to pre-pandemic standards awarding its qualifications in 2023. The option to omit an assessment unit in most subjects no longer applies in 2022/23. High level support for students to focus on revision went live on 27 February 2023.

Qualifications Wales

They have removed all the 2022 adaptations to assessment requirements and advance information was published on 6 February 2023 for the Qualifications Wales to approved GCSE S&A levels that was published by WJC on their websites. -

<https://qualifications.wales/media/rg5efcpn/qw-letter-to-heis-february-final-eng-070223.pdf>

Qualifications Wales have produced a learner guide to exams and assessments, which contains guidance on the advance information and their grading policy -[qw-qualifications-22-23-learner-guide-final-eng.pdf](#)

Group members are encouraged to 'have your say' - [Have your say - Qualifications Wales](#)

If anyone comes across a qualification ECF level 6 that they're unsure as to what it is, SCQF have an information service that can be contacted info@scf.org.uk

A3/20/07 Any other business and Close

The date of next meeting was agreed to be 3 October 2023 and a placeholder will be set shortly.

Regulatory approach Ofqual and DfE and to update.

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