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**VTQ Stakeholder Group
February 2019**

Qualification reviews, drivers of qualification choice and strengthening qualifications

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Qualification reviews – Lucy Sydney

L4/5 Qualification review

“There are good quality higher technical qualifications on the market already... What is missing is widespread clarity and confidence that these qualifications deliver the skills employers need.

That’s why I intend to establish a system of employer-led national standards for higher technical education which will be set by employers themselves. Through the Institute of Apprenticeships, we plan to identify and recognise existing and new qualifications that meet the knowledge and skills needed by employers.

Start calling these courses what they are: higher technical qualifications ...and develop clear national recognition...”

Damian Hinds, 6 December 2018

L3 & below qualification review

“In the T Level consultation response, we committed to carrying out a review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below, excluding A Levels and GCSEs. The review aims to simplify the current qualification landscape so that all qualifications continuing to receive public funding meet 3 principles: have a distinct purpose; are good quality; and support progression to good outcomes”

Department for Education, T Level Action Plan 2018

Next steps

- Firstly, DfE planning to remove funding from older versions of qualifications where new version of the qualifications are operating in parallel.
- DfE are planning a consultation in Spring 2019, on the principles, scope and process the review will follow.
- A second consultation will follow later this year setting out the proposed criteria that will determine whether a qualification will receive funding.

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**Drivers of qualification
choice – Lucy Sydney**

Why are we looking at drivers of qualification choice?

- To understand the qualifications market more effectively.
- To enable us to input into the Department's review of qualifications at level 3 and below
- To augment our [2015 purchasing behaviours publication](#). We often direct stakeholders to this report and have seen its value, however it focused mainly on how centres choose an Exam Board for their GQs. We want to expand our knowledge on this to understand how centres choose VTQs also.

What are the drivers of qualification choice?

- Drivers of qualification choice include:

- ❖ Learner drivers
- ❖ Employer drivers
- ❖ Funding/accountability drivers
- ❖ Centre drivers

What next?

- Research project on drivers of qualification choice
- The aim of the research study is to provide a statistically representative evidence base around:
 - The reasons centres choose to offer the VTQs that they do to 16-19 year olds
 - The reasons centres choose particular Awarding Organisations (AOs) for those VTQs
- Invitation to tender published 19 February 2019 with work expected to be done by May 2019
- We are expecting a survey of at least 600 stakeholders including private training providers, sixth form colleges, tertiary colleges, schools with 6th form centres, further education establishments and a range of other providers.

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**Strengthening
qualifications – Natalie
Prosser**



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Accountability for Awards

Steve Hickmott, Senior Manager VTQ Policy

Background

- Accountability for awards – controls in place between awarding organisations (AOs) and centres allowing centres to take assessment decisions on behalf of an AO
- Often referred to as Direct Claims Status (DCS)
- Industry practice approach to verification
- Not a regulatory concept or a fixed approach, instead, implementation varies between AOs in coverage and requirements
- For Centres this represents a trusted status – approval reduces the intensity of AO oversight on the centre

Why we are looking at this?

- As part of our ongoing regulatory work to secure and maintain standards, we have ramped up our focus on VTQs
- As part of that we have identified that the approaches AOs currently take to securing standards (in VTQs) vary between AO and qualification.
- We need to regulate to ensure the standards of qualifications and public confidence in them

What we want to achieve

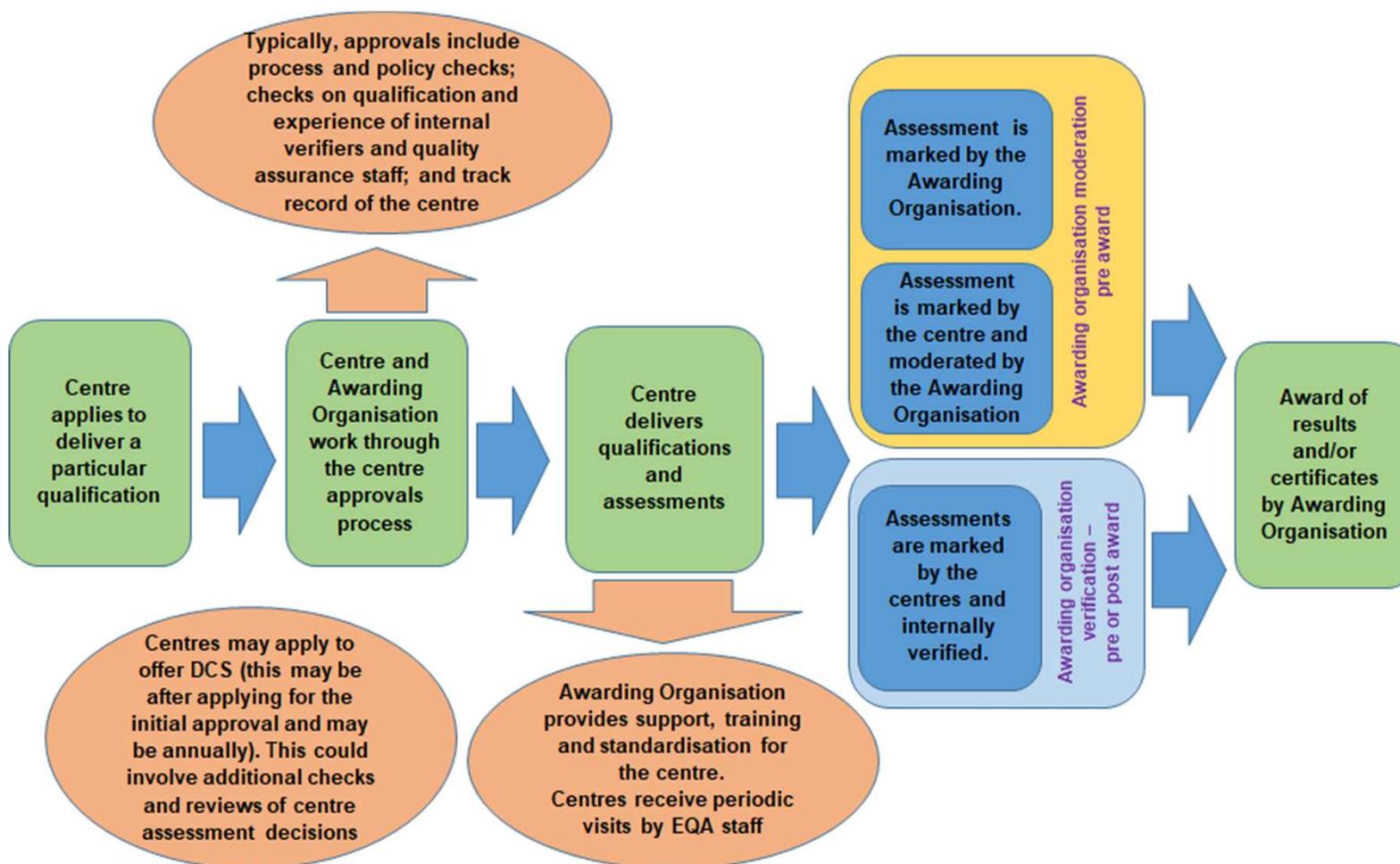
- A robust approach to verification – minimum level of control between AOs and centres, and for this to be applied consistently
- The right controls for each qualification – qualifications should be delivered in a way that meets the needs of users, as long as they are of the right standard
- Not to pose unnecessary burdens on AOs and centres
- Ofqual's requirements to be clear and to hold AOs to account against them

What we currently require

- There are a number of Conditions which interact with this area, including:
 - A4 – Conflicts of interest
 - C1 – Arrangements with third parties
 - C2 – Arrangements with centres
 - H1 – Marking the assessment
 - H2 – Moderation where an assessment is marked by a Centre
 - H5.1 – Results must be based on sufficient evidence, and
 - H6 – Issuing results

- We have also published guidance in many of these areas

What currently happens



Proposals

- Moderation and verification – distinguishing between pre-results moderation and ongoing verification checks
- Requiring Moderation for certain qualifications
- Centre controls – minimum requirements on the controls AOs have with centres
- AO strategy for its centre controls – clear explanations of an AO's approach and the reasons for it
- Results and certificates – clear guidance about what an AO should do if it discovers incorrect results

Next steps

- We have launched the consultation (on 25 February) which runs until 20 May
- Stakeholder consultation planned during the 12-week consultation period
- Analysis of responses over the Summer
- Announce decisions and consult on rules and guidance to implement any changes towards the end of 2019
- Announce final decisions and implementation late 2019/early 2020

VTQ Reform Updates:
T Levels
Apprenticeships
Basic Digital Skills
Functional Skills Qualifications



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T Level Update

26 February 2019

Purpose of today

1. Technical Education Reform – overall programme update
2. The introduction of T Levels
3. Collaboration with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education

Technical Education Reform - Background

- The **Independent Panel on Technical Education** was tasked with advising Ministers on actions to improve the quality of technical education in England
- **A compelling case for change**
 - The Panel highlighted the confusing multitude of qualifications available to young people, as well as issues with the market-based approach to qualifications
 - Conclusions were underpinned by substantial analysis of the existing skills system
- **The Panel recommended comprehensive reform**
 - The development of 15 technical routes to skilled employment, that encompass all employment-based and classroom-based training – including apprenticeships and T Levels
 - The development of new flagship technical education programmes to sit within these routes ('T Levels') to be delivered through exclusive license
 - A radical streamlining of existing technical qualifications, aiming to simplify the system for students and employers
 - Government accepted all recommendations in the 2016 Skills Plan, and subsequently committed to deliver first T Levels for teaching from September 2020

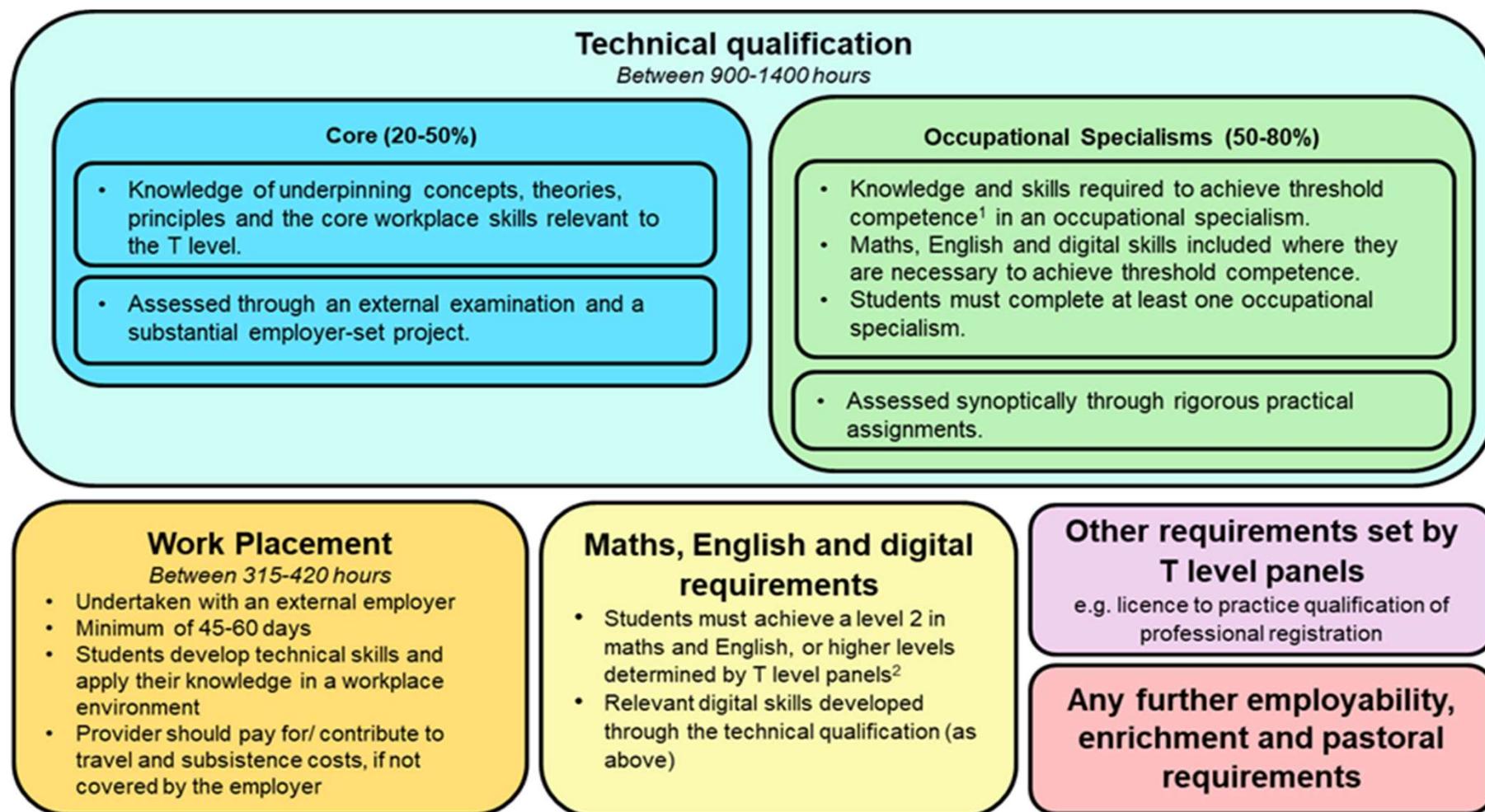
Technical Education Reform – Overall Programme

- The introduction of T Levels
 - Market reform
 - New qualifications
 - Industry placements
- Programme of sector readiness - ESFA
 - Selection of high quality training providers
 - Education and Training Foundation professional development programme
 - New capital investment
- Post-16 Qualifications Review
- Higher Technical Qualifications at Level 4/5
- Ongoing Apprenticeship reform

Technical Education: Looking Forward

- A public list of employer-endorsed qualifications
- Approved by the Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education
- Occupation-specific
 - Apprenticeships from Level 2 upwards
 - Technical Qualifications within T Levels at Level 3
 - Higher Technical Qualifications at Levels 4 & 5
- Underpinned by employer-agreed occupational standards
- Grouped in to 15 routes through technical education
- A clear alternative to the academic pathway.

A T Level programme of study



Technical Qualification within a T Level programme

Purpose and content

Purpose:

To ensure students have the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to progress into skilled employment or higher-level technical training relevant to the qualification.

Core:

- Students' knowledge and understanding of relevant contexts, concepts, theories and principles.
- Students' application of relevant core knowledge and skills.

Occupational specialisms:

- Knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to achieve threshold competence.
- This is defined as being “as close to full occupational competence as can be reasonably expected of students after two years of study in a provider based setting and must be validated by employers as sufficient to secure skilled employment in a relevant role”.

Technical Qualification - Structure

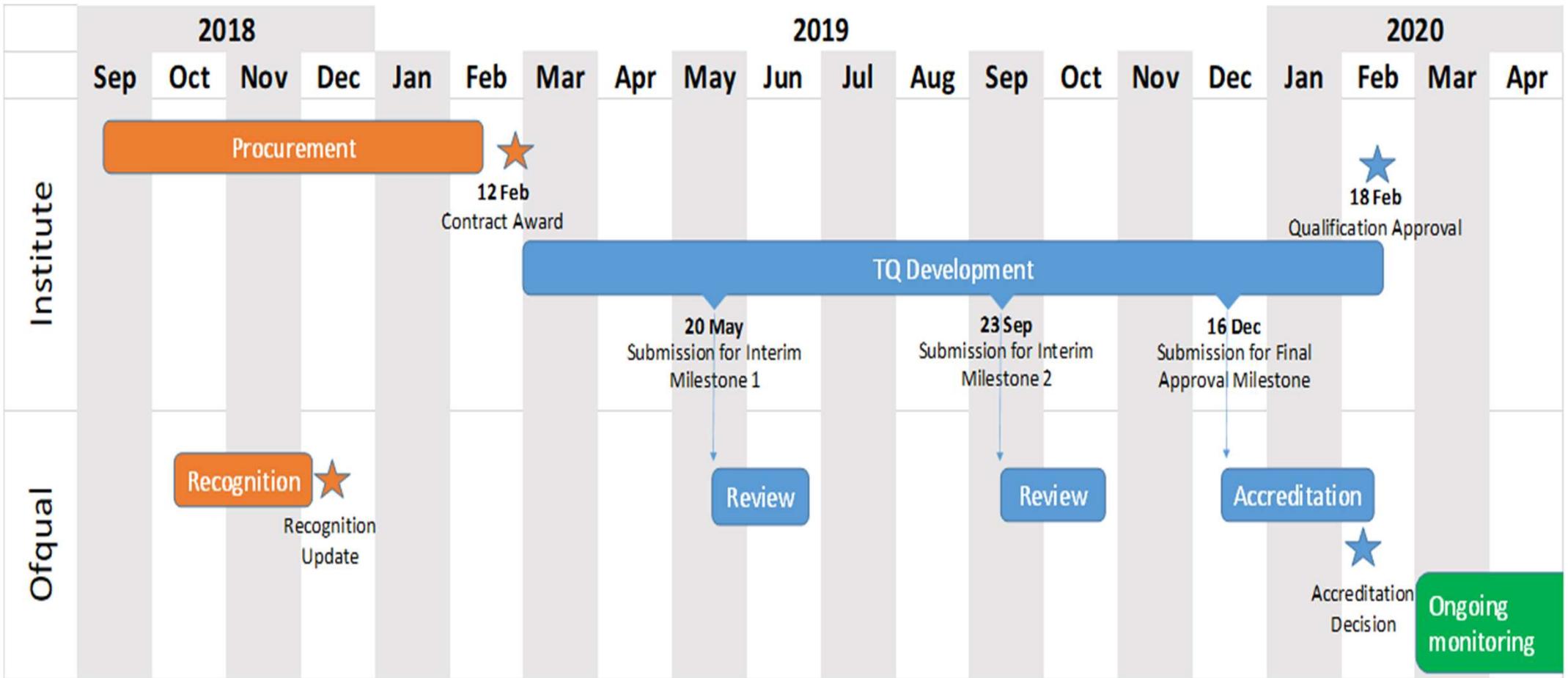
	TQ components (Approximately 900-1400 GLH in total; size equivalent to 3-4 A levels)		
	Students take <u>one</u> : Core 20-50%		Students take <u>at least one</u> : Occupational Specialism 50-80%
Type of content	Knowledge & Understanding	Knowledge & Skills	Knowledge, skills & behaviours to achieve threshold competence
Assessment method	Written exam AO set and marked	'Employer-set' project AO set and marked unless centre marking agreed	'Integrated', 'practical' assessment AO set and marked unless centre marking agreed
Grading	A* to E Combined grade across sub-components		Pass / Merit / Distinction Single grade per component

Sample content – TQ in Education and Childcare

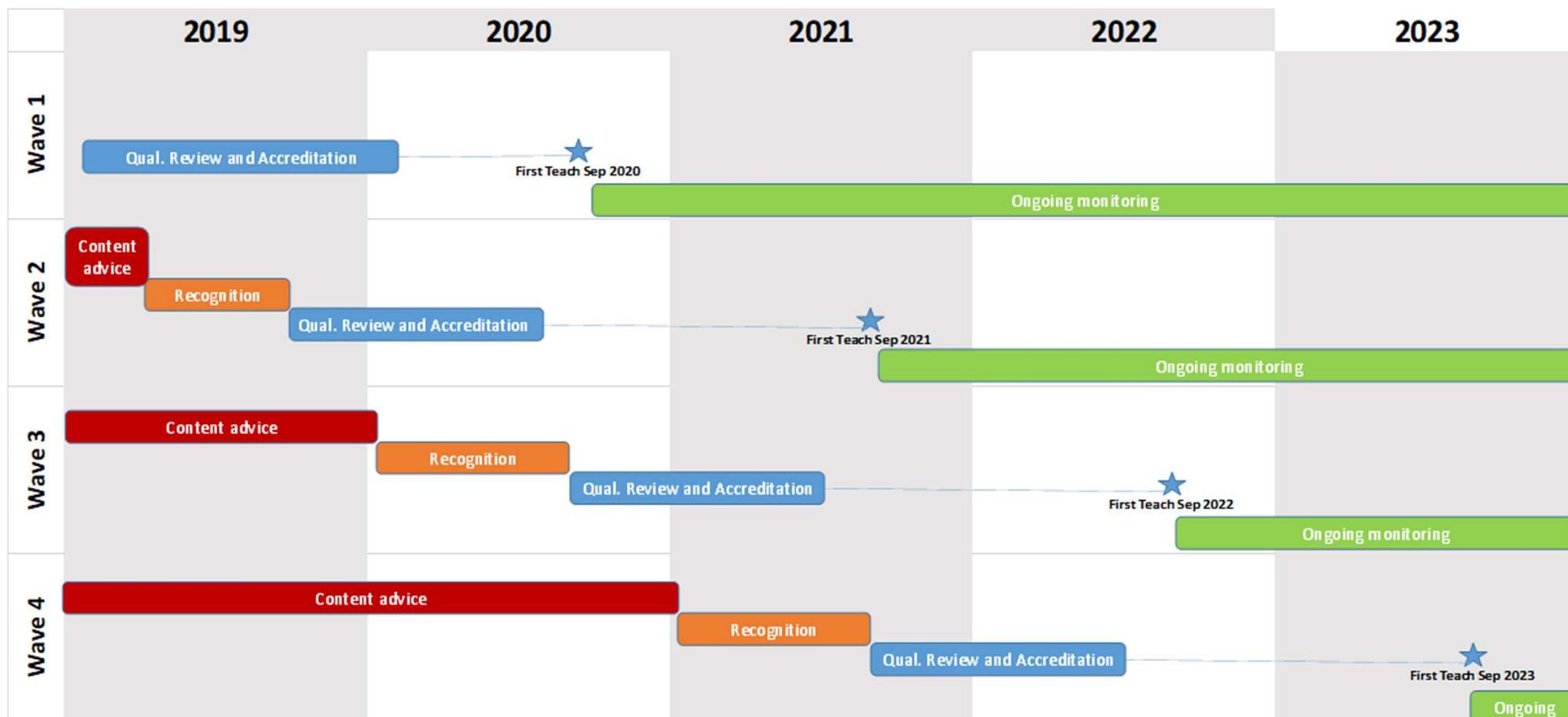
Summary of content – Example from TQ in Education & Childcare

Component	Content
Core – Knowledge & understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider Context • Child Development • Supporting Education • Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Wellbeing • Behaviour • Observation and Assessment • Equality and Diversity • Special Educational Needs and Disability • English as an Additional Language • Parents, Families and Carers • Working with Others • Reflective Practice
Occupational Specialism: Early years education and childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote children’s play, development and early education • Develop relationships with children to facilitate their development • Plan, provide and review care, play and educational opportunities to enable children to progress • Safeguard and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of children • Work in partnership with colleagues, parents, carers and other professionals to support children’s development
Occupational Specialism: Assisting teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the class teacher to enhance children’s education, individually and in groups • Plan, provide and review educational opportunities in collaboration with teachers and other adults • Safeguard and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of children and young people • Recognise, adapt and respond to individual children’s needs, including those with SEND, to support development and access to the curriculum
Occupational Specialism: Supporting and mentoring students in further and higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise, guide and supervise students to acquire the most benefit from their educational programme • Work with education providers and workplace colleagues to plan and implement structured and meaningful education and work experience • Support students’ progress and wellbeing • Promote students’ motivation, aspiration and engagement

T Levels – Wave 1 Timeline



T Levels Timeline





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APPRENTICESHIPS**

The Quality Framework for Technical Qualifications

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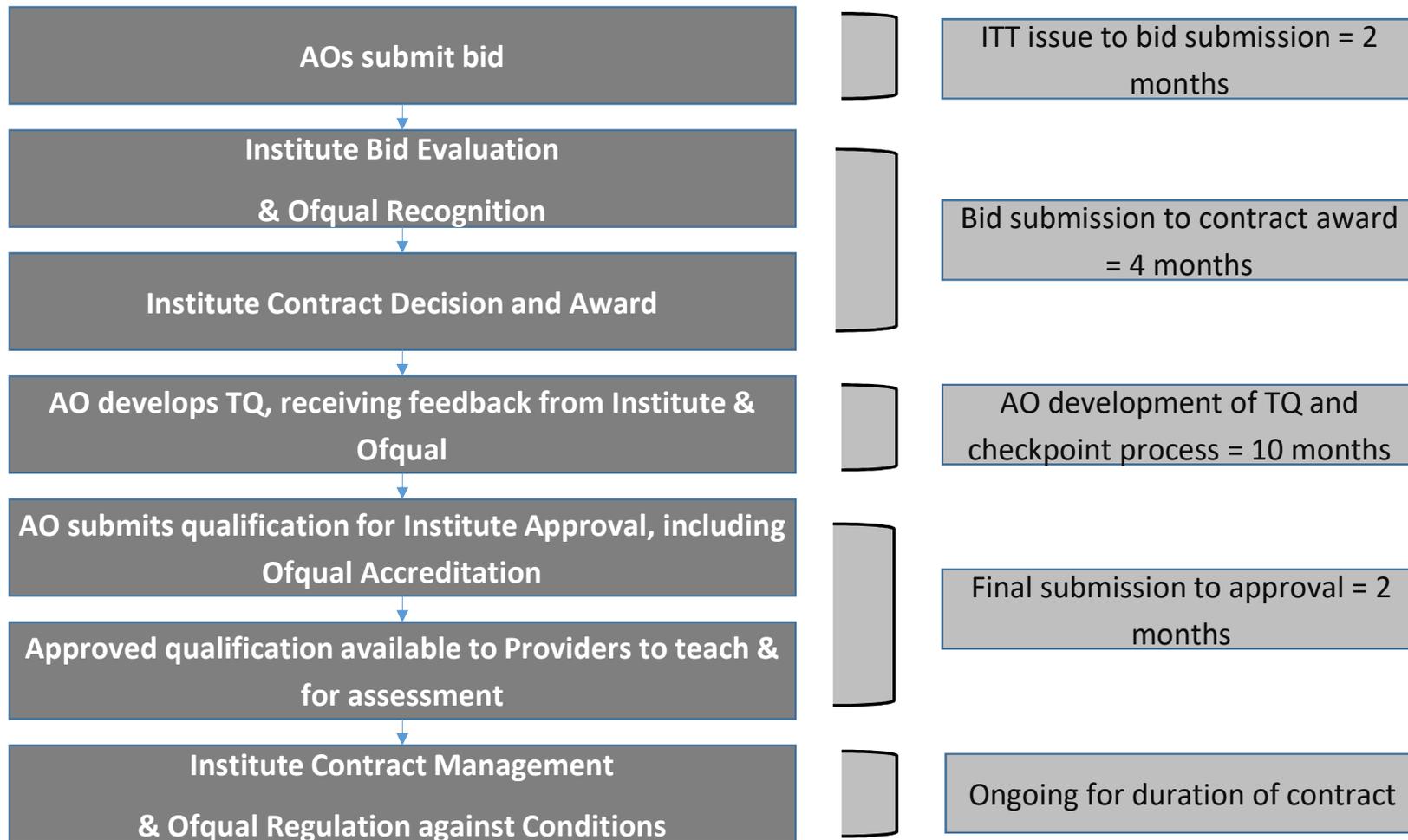
The Quality Framework

A collaborative approach utilising the expertise and statutory levers from each organisation to ensure that Technical Qualifications are the highest quality for learners and employers

The Institute & Ofqual

- The Institute has overall responsibility for the Technical Qualification
- Ofqual will regulate the Technical Qualification (and any other qualifications as required) within the T Level programme

The Quality Framework



Ofqual Recognition

- Every organisation who delivers and awards Technical Qualifications must be recognised by Ofqual
- If the Awarding Organisation is already recognised, the bid they submit will be shared with Ofqual as an application to extend the scope of their recognition to include the relevant Technical Qualification
- If they are not already a recognised Awarding Organisation, they will need to go through the full Ofqual recognition process
- We are recommending that all new entrants start the Ofqual recognition process early
- Ofqual is not part of the procurement decision-making process.

Regulation Against Ofqual Conditions

- The Quality Framework requires AOs to be regulated, and therefore to meet, on an ongoing basis, the relevant Ofqual Conditions and requirements as they develop, deliver and award the Technical Qualification.
- For Technical Qualifications, we have also set Qualification Level Conditions and requirements, which all Technical Qualifications must also meet. These are more detailed, taking account of the specific nature of Technical Qualifications, to help ensure valid assessments. These have now been published on our website.
- We will use our full suite of tools to regulate Technical Qualifications, including enforcement if appropriate.

TQ Qualification Level Conditions, Requirements And Guidance

- Assessment approach – assessment objectives, assessment strategies
- Describing TQs – Qualification titling, Total Qualification Time (TQT)
- Assessment – structure and weighting, number of assessments, controls, timing, retakes, marking
- Recognition of prior learning
- Standard setting
- Reviews of marking, moderation and appeals
- Disapplication of a small number of General Conditions, including in relation to issuing certificates
- TQ-specific guidance against General Conditions, including on issuing results

Approval Of The Qualification

- Awarding Organisations will be asked to submit materials (e.g. assessment strategy, sample assessment materials) at specific contract milestones. These will be shared simultaneously with Ofqual
- The Institute will evaluate the materials according to the Service Requirements specified in the contract
- Ofqual will accredit TQs against the following Accreditation Criterion:
“An awarding organisation must demonstrate to Ofqual’s satisfaction that it is capable of complying, on an on-going basis, with all of the General Conditions of Recognition that apply in respect of the qualification for which it is seeking accreditation, including all relevant Qualification Level Conditions and Subject Level Conditions.”
- The Institute makes the final approval decision, taking in to account Ofqual’s accreditation decision.

Ongoing Monitoring And Supervision

- The Institute will require regular meetings and written updates from AOs to monitor progress against the contract
- Awarding Organisations must continue to comply with Ofqual's monitoring requirements as part of the General Conditions of Recognition
- Notification of adverse effects (event notifications)
- Annual statement of compliance
- The Institute and Ofqual will be working collaboratively throughout the duration of the contract. Any information submitted to Ofqual on TQs will be shared with the Institute and vice versa
- Ofqual and the Institute will utilise contract management or regulatory levers as appropriate if AOs are found to be non-compliant.

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Apprenticeships – Steve Walker

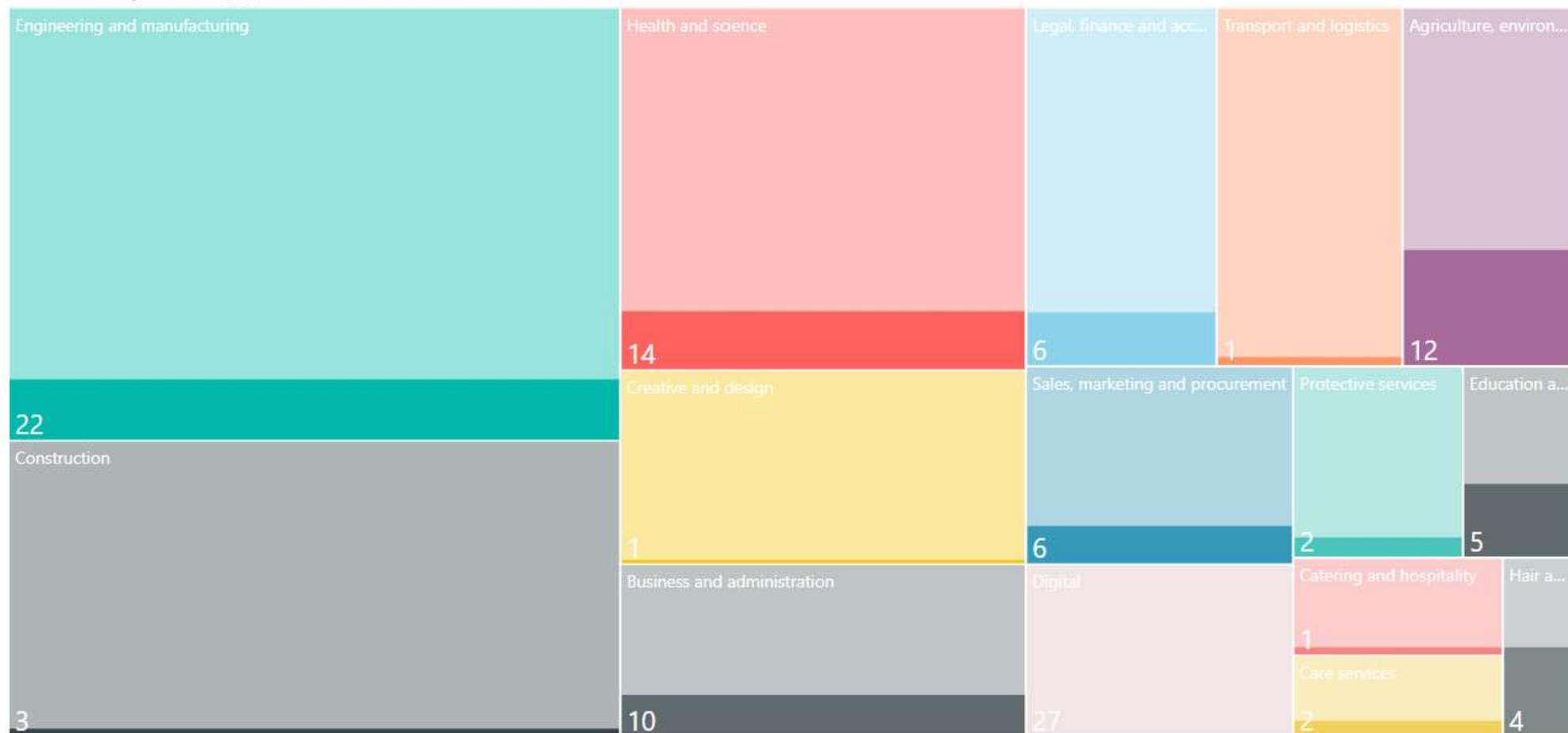
Apprenticeship landscape

Count of Stnd ID by Route **670**



Apprenticeship landscape

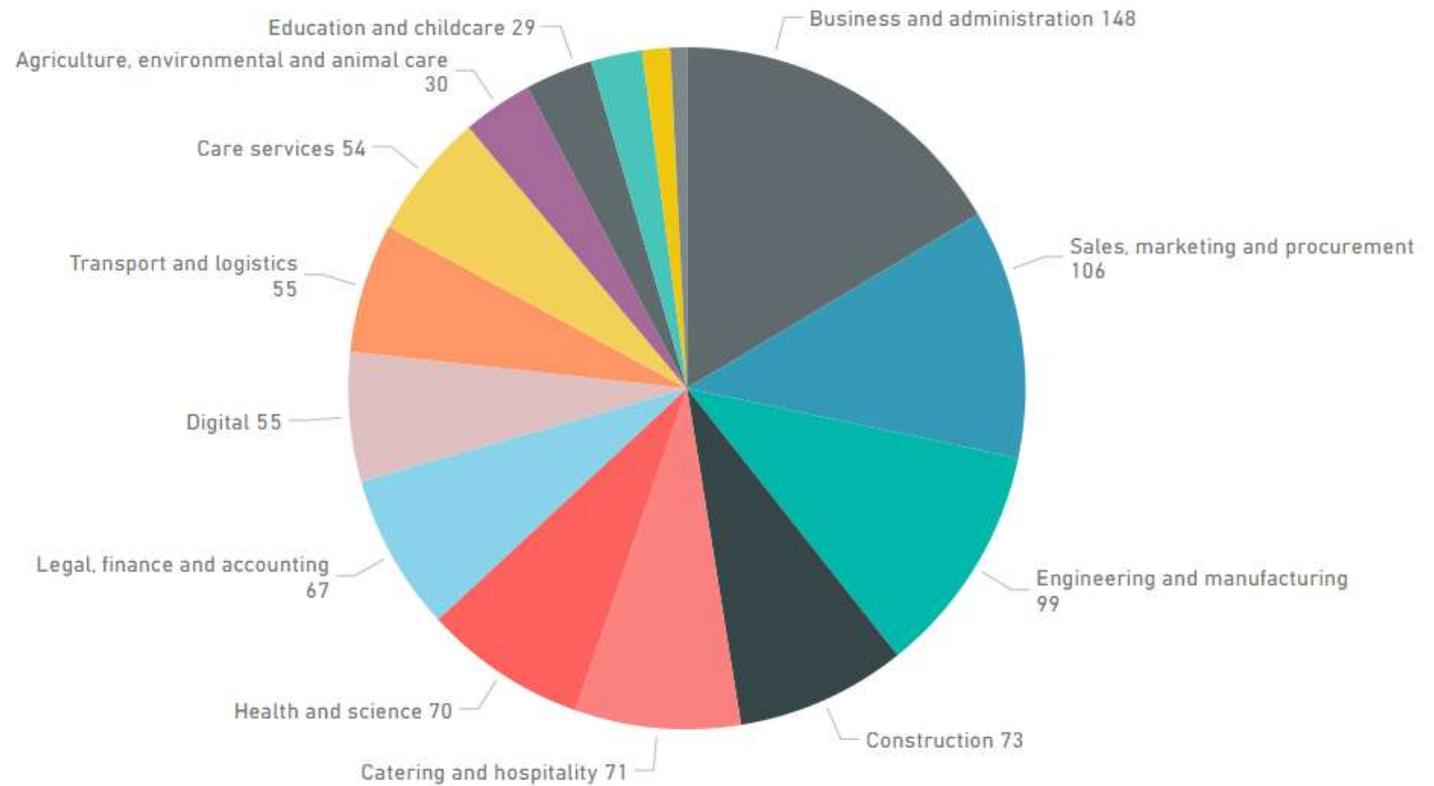
Count of Stnd ID by Route **89**



EPAs from approved standards

Count of EPA ID by Route **890**

Currently a potential **890** EPAs from **400** approved Standards

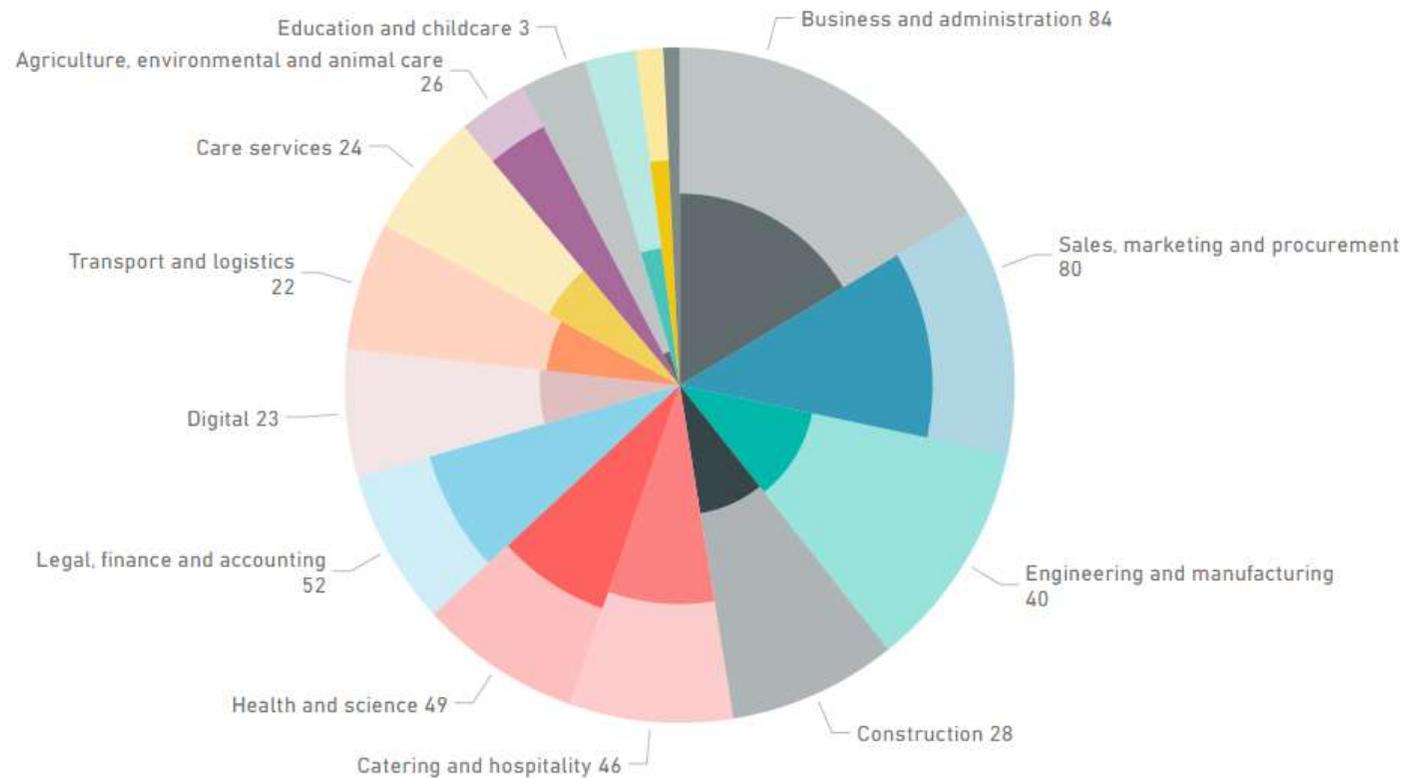


EPAs from approved standards

Count of EPA ID by Route **493**

Currently a potential **890** EPAs from **400** approved Standards

Regulated community accounts for **493** (**55%**) of potential EPAs



EPA 'Readiness'

Expected figures

from standards accepted by TAG

30

Organisations

116

EPAs

61

Standards

28850

Starts 2017/18

34

Standards have had any starts since IfA approval

Actual (Regulated) figures

- standards accepted by TAG
- scope of recognition has been approved
- qualification is available to learners

20

Organisations (AOs)

61

EPAs

27

Standards

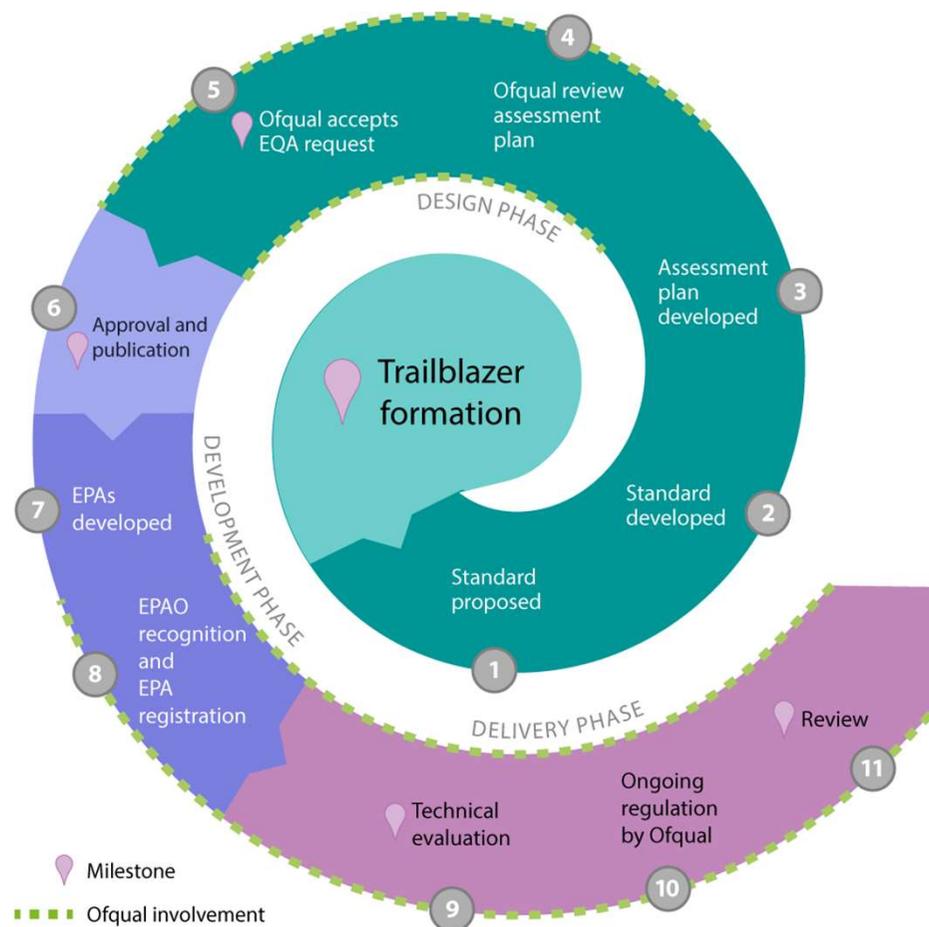
25060

Starts 2017/18

23

Regulated Standards have had any starts since IfA approval

Ofqual and EQA



Ofqual/18/6343

Technical Advisory Group

*“A good assessment procedure comprises features and processes which are designed to capture **signal** (concerning the proficiency of each candidate) and eliminate **noise**.”* (Paul Newton)



Assessment plan

Assessment
methods

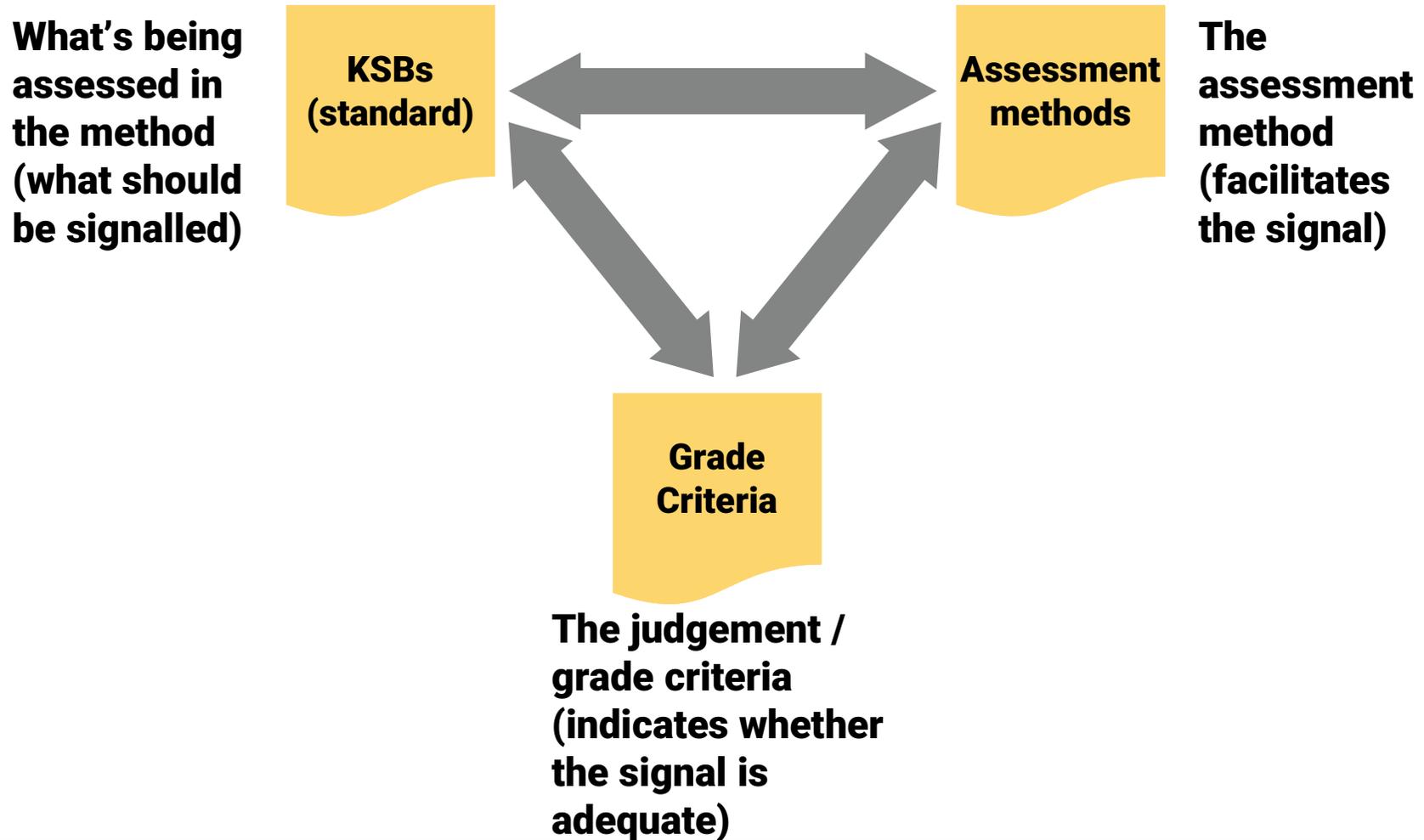
Grading

Grade
Criteria

Mapping of
KSBs

KSBs
(standard)

Interrelation of assessment features and processes



Grade Criteria example

Assessment method:
professional discussion

What's being assessed: **Skills**

- Model and promote positive behaviours expected of children such as turn taking and keeping reactions and emotions proportionate.
- Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.

Pass Criteria:

Model and promote positive behaviours within day to day practice.

Demonstrate at least one method of managing children's behaviour in relation to others.

Is there **a Measure?**

Is **the Measure clear?**

Is it Measureable, in the assessment method?

Suggested Pass Criteria:

Provides evidence of the ways positive behaviours have been modelled and promoted in their day to day practice.

Evidence at least one method of managing children's behaviour to achieve a positive outcome

A good grade criteria...

Facilitates **accurate** and **useful** assessment results by clarifying the measure that needs to be measured

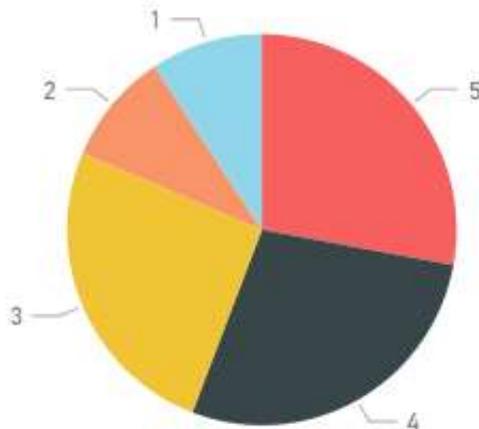
- Is there a measure? (or is it just a learning outcome)
- Is the measure clear? (objective, well defined)
- Is it measurable? (appropriate to the assessment method)



Technical Evaluation

Facts and figures

Count of QAN by TE Tranche



(Involved in TE Tranches so far)

EPAs covered

43

Count of QAN

AOs involved

16

Count of Orq ID

Standards covered

15

Count of Stnd ID

TE Tranche	Count of QAN
1	4
2	4
3	11
4	12
5	12
Total	43

Technical Evaluation Process

Materials

- question papers
- assessor guidance documents
- apprentice guidance documents
- standardisation procedures and guidance
- grading exemplification
- specifications
- malpractice and reasonable adjustment policies

Considerations

- the extent to which the EPA adheres to the approved assessment plan
- the level of demand in tasks and/or assessment criteria
- the clarity and manageability of task requirements
- the suitability of the procedures for authenticating evidence
- the scope for accurate and consistent assessor judgements



Technical Evaluation outcomes

Actions and outcomes resulting from our technical evaluation feedback to AOs.

- amended errors of interpretation in relation to the assessment plan
- amended documentation to make assessment requirements clearer for apprentices and assessors
- changed processes to increase efficiency and manageability for assessors
- clarified assessment parameters for EPAs (e.g. timings)
- clarified guidance around ensuring the authenticity of apprentice evidence
- Requested results data to verify the comparability of, and to justify the rationale behind, some assessment approaches.

Assessment Plan Queries (APQ)

- To consider queries from EPAOs as a result of operationalising assessment plans
 - errors
 - ambiguities
 - issues that effect standards (e.g. of consistent interpretation, fairness for apprentices)
- Gather evidence
 - differences of interpretation that do not effect standards
 - adds to our intelligence base
 - amalgamation of evidence is taken forward to review or for further investigation (e.g. evidence of manageability issues)



- Actions
 - liaise with trailblazers
 - collaborate with IfA to change plans
 - communicate with all EPAOs involved

Ongoing regulatory activity

- Our tranche of assessor capacity and capability audits nearing completion
 - (although not yet finalised), one emerging theme is around the difficulty AOs face in planning their EPA delivery
- Event notifications, and intelligence
 - enables us to safeguard the delivery of assessment for some apprentices
 - clarification of publicised material by some EPAOs





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**Functional Skills
Qualifications and Basic
Digital Skills- Lucy
Sydney**

Functional Skills Qualifications – English and Maths

- **Subject content published February 2018**
- **Our rules published July 2018**
- **AOs are developing assessment materials for reformed FSQs and we are reviewing them through our technical evaluation process.**
- **Information on our website:**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/functional-skills-qualifications>

Functional Skills Qualifications – English and Maths - readiness

	Maths		English	
	L1/L2	Entry	L1/L2	Entry
AQA	4		4	
City & Guilds	4	1	2	1
Future Quals	3		3	
Highfield	2		2	
IQ	3	3	3	3
NCFE	2	2	2	2
NOCN	3	3	3	3
OCR	3	3	3	3
Open Awards	3	2	3	2
Pearson	4	4	4	4
Skillsfirst	3		3	

Key

1. Awarding organisation is yet to submit materials to Ofqual for technical evaluation
2. Currently undergoing technical evaluation by Ofqual
3. Has been through technical evaluation by Ofqual and is back with awarding organisation
4. Resubmitted to Ofqual and undergoing technical evaluation
5. Has completed Ofqual process of technical evaluation

Functional Skills Qualifications – Digital

- Current FSQs in ICT are also due to be reformed following the policy steer from Anne Milton
- DfE has indicated an intention that new Digital FSQs will be available for first teaching in September 2021.

Basic Digital Skills Qualifications

- Our BDS consultation closed on 13 January 2019 and we are now considering the responses.
- We intend to publish our decisions in Spring 2019.

Introducing Basic Digital Skills Qualifications

Basic Digital Skills Qualifications (BDSQs) aim to enable learners to develop and provide evidence of the basic digital skills required for life, the significant majority of jobs and further study. They will be based on new national Basic Digital Skills standards and available from 2020.



Handling Information



Creating and editing
digital content



Communicating



Transacting



Being safe and
responsible
online

Balancing priorities

We have had to balance many different priorities when developing our approach to the regulation of BDSQs.



Our proposals at a glance

As far as possible, we propose to regulate these qualifications and the awarding organisations which offer them, through our General Conditions. But we also propose to introduce some BDSQ specific rules and guidance to secure our policy objectives and the government's intentions.

These are the features we are proposing to introduce rules around

Basic Digital Skills Qualifications

'beginner'

Entry level content, awarded at Entry 3

'essential'

Level 1

Comply with national standards

Standard titling convention

Awarding organisations set assessments

Compensatory, mark based assessment

Centre adaptation

No adaptation

Centre or awarding organisation marked

Awarding organisation marked

Pass/fail grading

Assessment strategy and technical evaluation

Timeline

