

Withdrawing the Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework



In July 2014 we published a consultation about withdrawing the Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (the QCF rules) in England and Northern Ireland. These design rules require vocational qualifications to be structured and assessed in a particular way. The consultation proposed to withdraw the QCF rules and set out how this could work. We made these proposals because our earlier review of the QCF found that it does not always support the development and delivery of high-quality vocational qualifications.

We have reviewed the responses to the consultation and can now announce our decision. We are publishing an analysis of all the responses we received alongside this document.¹

The QCF rules

When we analysed the responses to our consultation on withdrawing the QCF rules, it was clear that there was a range of views. Although some respondents disagreed with some of our proposals, no-one identified significant barriers to our main proposal to withdraw the QCF rules.

Both the evidence from our review and from our consultation has led us to conclude that the QCF rules should be removed because they impose a one-size-fits-all approach to the design of qualifications, which is not always consistent with the development of high-quality vocational qualifications that meet employers' needs. We have, therefore, decided to withdraw the QCF rules in the near future. When we lift the rules good qualifications that currently meet them will be able to stay, but we will expect qualifications that aren't valid to be redeveloped or withdrawn.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/withdrawing-qcf-regulatory-arrangements

The unit bank and unit-sharing

In our consultation we said that we would begin to wind down unit-sharing from January 2015 and that we would close the QCF unit bank. A number of responses to our consultation asked about transitional arrangements and sought more time to plan for changes. We recognise that more time is needed to plan for and manage this change, so we will not start to wind down unit-sharing or close the unit bank in January.

Further consultation

In early 2015, we will publicly consult on our implementation plans, setting out the detail of any new Conditions and Guidance needed to support the removal of QCF rules. We do not expect to withdraw the QCF rules, close the unit bank, end unit-sharing or make any other changes before summer 2015.