

20 July 2018

Rt Hon Anne Milton MP
Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills
Department for Education
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Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 4 June, setting out your policy priorities for basic digital skills qualifications.

I welcome the fact that work is being undertaken to update and improve the national standards for basic digital skills. I agree that this should be the catalyst for a reform of current digital skills qualifications that were developed against outdated digital skills standards. We are certain that these qualifications can be improved further and look forward to working with the Department for Education to ensure that the reformed qualifications reflect the full range of expected digital knowledge, skills and application described in the new national standards.

I understand the need to improve recognition, consistency and transferability of these new qualifications and the intent to achieve this through a standard titling convention. I am equally keen that qualifications and their outcomes are easily understood by learners, employers and other users of qualifications. I have therefore asked my team to look specifically at how regulation might assist here and we will provide you with some options as soon as possible.

Your letter notes a number of intentions that will have to be carefully considered. You rightly identify the need to strike the right balance between the need to encourage innovation and flexibility while making sure that assessments standards are maintained sufficiently. We will consider your policy objectives very carefully in light of our role in ensuring that assessment is valid, reliable and manageable. In this context, your clarification that these qualifications will not be used for accountability purposes is particularly helpful.

I know that our teams are in close contact on the further development of this important policy initiative. This will inform our regulatory approach to basic digital qualifications and I hope to launch a formal consultation in the autumn. In the meantime, I look forward to continuing to work closely with you to ensure the

successful introduction of these improved qualifications and hope to hear from you later this year about your policy objectives for Functional Skills ICT qualifications.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Collier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath the name.

Sally Collier
Chief Regulator