



Statistical Release

Vocational and Other Qualifications Quarterly January – March 2015

Contents

Key points.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Key statistics.....	4
External influences.....	6
Analysis.....	10
Background notes.....	22
Glossary of terms.....	30
Your feedback.....	32
Appendix.....	33

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Key points

This release presents information on the range and number of, and certificates issued for, regulated qualifications during January – March 2015 (2015 Q1), excluding GCSEs and A levels. The key findings are:

- Just over 1.3 million certificates were issued, a decrease of 6 per cent on the same quarter of 2014.
- The number of available qualifications this quarter increased slightly from 21,007 in October – December 2014 to 21,043, the highest number recorded.
- The number of certificates awarded for qualifications in construction, planning and the built environment has increased by 43 per cent this quarter compared with the same quarter in 2014 (from 33,350 to 47,600).
- The number of certificates awarded for qualifications at Level 4 and above has increased by 25 per cent on the same quarter in 2014 (from 21,050 to 26,250). The increase was mainly in qualifications in business management (from 5,950 to 9,500).
- The number of certificates awarded for qualifications in first aid at work (from 72,050 to 77,200), health and safety in the workplace (from 21,300 to 23,000) and paediatric first aid (from 10,750 to 13,350) has increased this quarter.
- Certificates awarded in Northern Ireland have increased by 4 per cent this quarter compared with the same quarter in the previous year, while certificates awarded in England and Wales have decreased (5 and 17 per cent, respectively).

Introduction

Ofqual regulates qualifications and assessments in England, and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland. Ofqual also collects and publishes data for vocational and other qualifications on behalf of the regulator in Wales and for other general qualifications (see glossary) and entry level qualifications for the regulator in Northern Ireland (CCEA). Ofqual's objectives include promoting public confidence in and awareness of regulated qualifications.

Regulated qualifications are classified into 19 qualification types with an associated 'level', which is indicative of difficulty. The table below shows the current levels for each type of qualification and the relationship between them. Level 3 is at about the same level of demand, but not necessarily the same size, as an A level, and Level 2 is at about the same level of demand as a GCSE at grade C or above.

Table of qualification types and levels

Qualification type	Current levels
Advanced Extension Award	Level 3
Basic skills	Entry level, Levels 1 and 2
English for speakers of other languages	Entry level, Levels 1, 2 and 3
Entry level	Entry
Free-standing mathematics qualification	Levels 1, 2, 3
Functional skills	Entry level, Levels 1 and 2
GCE A level	Level 3
GCE AS qualification	Level 3
GCSE (9 to 1)	Level 1 / Level 2
GCSE	Level 1 / Level 2
Higher level	Levels 4 to 8
Key skills	Levels 1 to 4
NVQ	Levels 1 to 5
Other general qualification	Levels 1, 1 / 2, 2 and 3
Occupational qualification	Levels 1 to 4
Principal learning	Levels 1 to 3
Project	Levels 1 to 3
QCF	Entry level, Levels 1 to 8
Vocationally related qualification	Entry level, Levels 1 to 8

This release presents data on regulated vocational and other qualifications¹ (coloured green in the table above) for both the January – March 2015 quarter and the 12-month period to the end of March 2015.

This release does not include the Advanced Extension Award, GCSEs, AS qualifications, A levels, or the Diploma and its components – project and principal learning (coloured grey in the table). Neither does it include university degrees, which Ofqual does not regulate.

¹ Vocational and other qualifications are taken in order to develop and demonstrate the skills needed for a particular job, to improve career progression, or for personal growth or leisure purposes. They include academic qualifications taken in schools, sixth forms and colleges, for example Level 1/2 Certificates (also known as IGCSEs) and BTECs.

Key statistics

Available qualifications

During January – March 2015 (2015 Q1), the number of available qualifications (see glossary) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland increased slightly to 21,043, from 21,007 in the previous quarter. This is the highest number recorded in the last five years. This increase was driven by qualifications offered on the Qualification Curriculum Framework (QCF) and in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). For all other types of qualifications, the number of available qualifications decreased or stayed the same.

Certifications

Just over 1.3 million vocational and other qualifications were awarded this quarter. This is a decrease of 6 per cent compared with the same quarter of 2014. The number of certificates issued in the 12-month period to March 2015 decreased by 7 per cent compared with the 12 months to March 2014.

Construction, planning and the built environment

The number of certificates awarded for qualifications in construction, planning and the built environment has increased by 43 per cent this quarter compared with the same quarter in 2014 (from 33,350 to 47,600). The increase is almost entirely a consequence of the introduction for qualifications for Level 1 Award in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment (for which the number of awards has increased from 150 to 11,250). These are relatively new qualifications and have been developed to fulfil the requirement of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) for workers to have a health and safety qualification when applying for a green CSCS card – labourer card.²

Qualifications at Level 4 and above

The number of certificates awarded for qualifications at Level 4 and above has increased by 25 per cent compared to the same quarter of 2014 (from 21,050 to 26,250). This increase is due to growth in the number of certificates awarded for qualifications in the business, administration, finance and law sector (from 9,450 to 13,400).

First aid qualifications

There has been an increase in the number of certificates awarded in first aid at work (from 72,050 to 77,200) and paediatric first aid qualifications (from 10,750 to 13,350).

² www.cscs.uk.com/applying-for-cards/green-card-changes/card-type/labourer

This increase reflects the recent requirement by the Health and Safety Executive for first aiders at work to complete a regulated qualification as one of the ways to comply with the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981. The increase in paediatric first aid qualifications is because a requirement set out by the practice guidance in the Early Years Foundation Stage for Ofsted-regulated childcare settings has come into effect. This requirement states that when children are present at least one person with a paediatric first aid qualification gained through a regulated qualification or other recognised training programme (renewed every three years) must be on the premises and available at all times.³

Northern Ireland

The number of certificates awarded in Northern Ireland increased by 4 per cent this quarter compared to the same quarter last year (from 30,200 to 31,350), while there was a decline in the number of certificates awarded in England and Wales (5 and 17 per cent, respectively). The increase in Northern Ireland is accounted for by an increase in the number of certificates awarded by Cambridge English Language Assessment in ESOL qualifications.

³ *Statutory Framework for the Early Stage Foundation Stage:*

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335504/EYFS_framework_from_1_September_2014_with_clarification_note.pdf

External influences

Changes in the number of qualifications available and in the number of certifications are likely to be influenced by changes to government policies in England, including changes in government funding, performance tables and study programmes.

Public funding changes by the Skills Funding Agency⁴

In the last few years, the funding rules for vocational qualifications post-19 years of age have seen a number of changes that are likely to have had some effect on the number of certificates awarded each year. The Skills Funding Agency introduced new business rules in September 2013 to target funding at qualifications that most closely align with the government's skills policy.⁵ A particular aspect of these rules is the withdrawal of funding for qualifications with low enrolment. The funding rule changes for 2014/15 include a requirement that qualifications have at least 15 credits for adult learning and have clear outcomes for progression to employment or the next level of learning. (There are some areas where these rules do not apply, such as qualifications to help the unemployed. Full details of the changes are published by the Skills Funding Agency.⁶) Throughout these statistics, there are examples of declines in the number of certifications for qualifications from which funding has been removed.

School funding and study programmes in England

Schools and colleges in England previously received funding for post-16 education based on the qualifications that students took. This has now changed and schools and colleges receive funding per student. According to the new funding criteria, students are expected to either participate in a Key Stage 4 programme of learning (the two years of school education that incorporate GCSEs, and other exams, in maintained schools, normally known as Years 10 and 11) or take a study programme

⁴ The Skills Funding Agency funds adult skills training for further education in England. It supports over 1,000 colleges, private training organisations and employers with more than £4 billion of funding each year.

⁵ *Skills Funding Statement 2013–2016*:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278529/bis-14-p172a-skills-funding-statement-2013-2016.pdf

⁶ *Qualifications Information Guide 2014 to 2015*:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/340925/Qualifications_Information_Guide_2014_to_2015.pdf

that includes a qualification of the size and difficulty of an A level (aged 16 to 18).⁷ Students aged 16 to 19 are still undertaking learning programmes but may no longer be taking as many qualifications as they may have done in the past. There has been a decline in the number of vocational qualifications taken in schools since the academic year 2012/13.

School performance tables⁸

There has been a considerable change in the way that qualifications are used in schools following the *Wolf Report*.⁹ In 2013, any qualification on the section 96¹⁰ funding list could count towards the school and college performance tables at Key Stages 4 and 5. Since 2014, only a small number of non-GCSEs or A levels have been included in performance tables. This is likely to have created changes within schools and colleges, away from qualifications that are not included in performance tables.

Moreover, qualifications in these tables were previously weighted. Larger qualifications gained a higher rating and could be worth more than one qualification in the performance table. This is no longer the case and all qualifications now count as one qualification. Examples of such declines can be seen in these statistics.

⁷ *Study Programmes for 16- to 19-Year-Olds*:

www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/1.%20Government%20response%20to%20consultation%20on%20study%20programmes%20for%2016-%20to%2019-year-olds%20for%20publication%20july%202012.pdf

⁸ The key government benchmark for the attainment of Key Stage 4 pupils (aged 15 to 16) is the percentage of pupils gaining the equivalent of at least five A* to C GCSE passes, including English and mathematics. In the tables, vocational qualifications such as BTECs and NVQs are given equivalency scores to GCSEs.

⁹ *Review of Vocational Education – The Wolf Report* (March 2011) considered how the Department for Education can improve vocational education for 14 to 19 year olds:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180504/DFE-00031-2011.pdf

¹⁰ Where section 96 approval has been awarded to a qualification, it enables that qualification to be taught in funded institutions, such as maintained schools, academies and post-16 institutions, and for public funds to be used for these courses and qualifications.

Tables of key statistics for vocational qualifications

	October- December 2014	January-March 2015	Change on previous qtr
Number of available qualifications	21,007	21,043	0.2
Number of awarding organisations			
with available qualifications this quarter	160	159	-1
with available qualifications this quarter and certificates awarded in the last 12 months	157	155	-1
Basic skills	10	10	0
English for speakers of other languages	185	195	5
Entry level	186	165	-11
Free-standing mathematics qualification	14	14	0
Functional skills	215	215	0
Higher level	125	109	-13
Key skills	125	116	-7
NVQ	142	94	-34
Occupational qualification	1	1	0
Other general qualification	595	559	-6
QCF	18,908	19,141	1
Vocationally related qualification	501	424	-15
Number of available qualifications by level			
Entry level	2,675	2,708	1
Level 1	2,986	2,961	-1
Level 1/2	164	164	0
Level 2	6,586	6,636	1
Level 3	6,092	6,024	-1
Level 4	1,417	1,431	1
Level 5	656	683	4
Level 6	240	238	-1
Level 7	185	191	3
Level 8	6	7	17
Number of available qualifications by sector subject area			
Health, Public Services and Care	2,171	2,300	6
Science and Mathematics	172	175	2
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	825	832	1
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	2,142	2,135	0
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	1,331	1,354	2
Information and Communication Technology	462	428	-7
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	2,423	2,414	0
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	934	918	-2
Arts, Media and Publishing	1,630	1,505	-8
History, Philosophy and Theology	47	47	0
Social Sciences	22	22	0
Languages, Literature and Culture	1,333	1,291	-3
Education and Training	1,157	1,159	0
Preparation for Life and Work	3,941	4,030	2
Business, Administration, Finance and Law	2,417	2,433	1

Statistical Release
Vocational and Other Qualifications Quarterly: January – March 2015

	January - March 2014	January - March 2015	Change on previous qtr	April - March 2014	April - March 2015	Change on previous 12 months
Overall number of certificates awarded	1,415,250	1,336,950	-6	9,112,400	8,456,900	-7
Number of certificates by type of qualification						
Basic skills	1,000	50	-95	47,450	1,800	-96
English for speakers of other languages	74,550	72,650	-3	299,700	374,950	25
Entry level	5,400	3,150	-42	104,350	77,400	-26
Free-standing mathematics qualification	500	550	10	23,100	35,900	55
Functional skills	194,450	179,200	-8	984,650	1,019,450	4
Higher level	900	1,450	61	6,050	5,750	-5
Key skills	21,150	16,650	-21	350,750	113,200	-68
NVQ	1,900	700	-63	15,200	4,550	-70
Occupational qualification	0	0		250	0	-100
Other general qualification	81,700	74,750	-9	669,300	829,200	24
QCF	1,020,800	981,200	-4	6,281,700	5,825,550	-7
Vocationally related qualification	12,950	6,650	-49	329,900	169,150	-49
Number of certificates by qualification level						
Entry level	163,000	148,450	-9	962,300	973,150	1
Level 1	353,550	319,050	-10	2,281,950	1,938,050	-15
Level 1/2	29,950	32,650	9	176,400	363,400	106
Level 2	671,650	623,500	-7	4,300,800	3,693,750	-14
Level 3	176,050	187,050	6	1,274,500	1,365,800	7
Level 4	11,800	12,050	2	63,750	59,600	-7
Level 5	6,600	9,750	48	36,400	46,000	26
Level 6	1,500	2,700	80	9,150	10,950	20
Level 7	1,050	1,600	52	6,750	5,850	-13
Level 8	50	100	100	400	300	-25
Number of certificates by sector subject area						
Health, public services and care	259,350	259,900	0	1,142,450	1,204,300	5
Science and mathematics	2,400	2,200	-8	277,600	284,200	2
Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	17,900	19,400	8	115,450	114,100	-1
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	74,350	73,200	-2	428,950	398,150	-7
Construction, planning and the built environment	33,350	47,600	43	234,400	256,050	9
Information and communication technology	54,100	48,600	-10	605,150	462,500	-24
Retail and commercial enterprise	140,250	133,550	-5	732,200	670,600	-8
Leisure, travel and tourism	59,650	51,550	-14	535,100	456,250	-15
Arts, media and publishing	101,350	107,750	6	883,200	894,100	1
History, philosophy and theology	100	550	450	41,150	30,850	-25
Social sciences	100	100	0	4,550	6,050	33
Languages, literature and culture	67,150	69,650	4	463,950	434,400	-6
Education and training	19,950	17,600	-12	106,250	95,200	-10
Preparation for life and work	462,500	406,700	-12	2,857,950	2,529,900	-11
Business, administration, finance and law	122,700	98,600	-20	684,050	620,300	-9
Number of certificates by country						
England	1,272,250	1,211,750	-5	8,242,950	7,604,500	-8
Wales	112,750	93,850	-17	660,350	623,800	-6
Northern Ireland	30,200	31,350	4	209,100	228,600	9

Analysis

This section presents figures on the number of qualifications that are available for students to enrol on (even if only for one day during the quarter), as well as those that may have expired (where students can no longer enrol) but remain active until the final certificate has been issued.

Qualifications available

This quarter, the number of available qualifications increased by less than 1 per cent compared to the previous quarter, from 21,007 to 21,043 (see table of key statistics on page 8). The number of available qualifications decreased or stayed the same for all types of qualifications (except QCF and ESOL). Seven of the 10 levels and 11 of the 15 sectors had a similar or higher number of available qualifications this quarter compared to last quarter. The overall increase resulted from 596 new qualifications becoming available (530 on the QCF) and 560 qualifications expiring (most of these being vocationally related qualifications, QCF and NVQs). More than two-third of the qualifications (63 per cent) that expired had no certifications in the 12 months to the end of December 2014. The 596 newly available qualifications are delivered by 72 awarding organisations.

Table 1 of the appendix presents the number of available qualifications over the past five years, broken down by type.

Awarding organisations

The number of recognised awarding organisations (159) offering regulated qualifications is one less than in the previous quarter. The number of organisations that issued certificates this quarter was broadly unchanged at 155 (from 157).

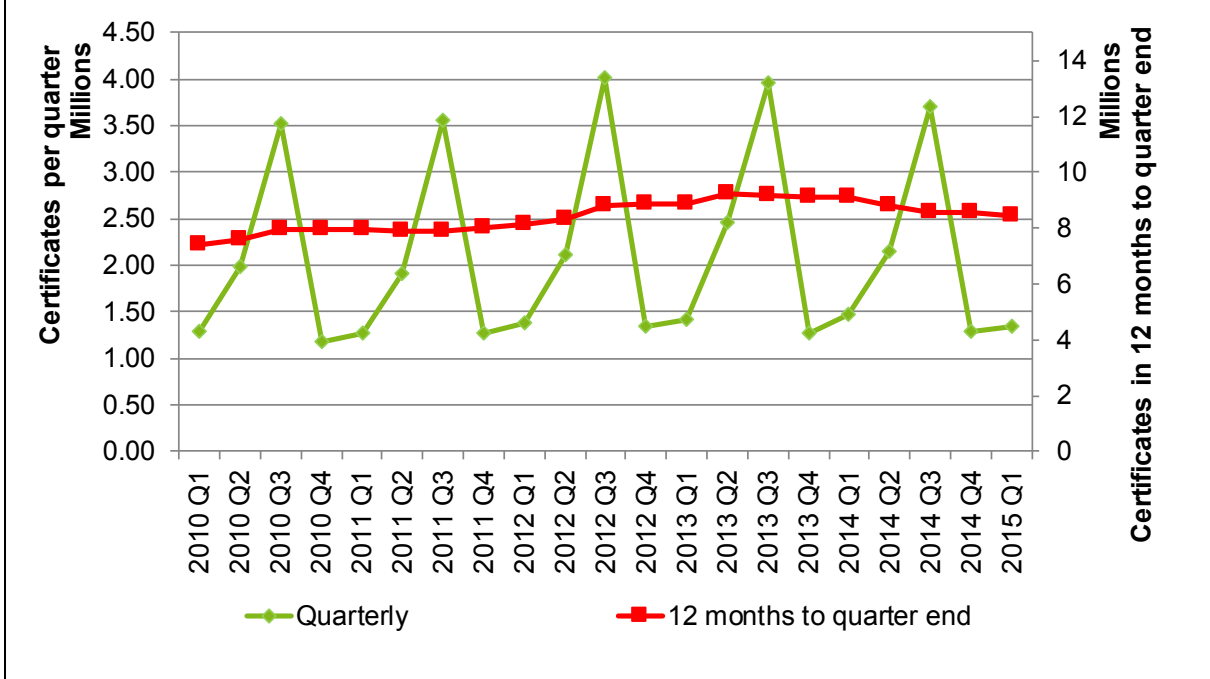
Certificates issued

There was a decrease of 6 per cent in the number of certificates issued compared with the same quarter of 2014 (from 1.4 million to 1.3 million).

Figure 1 illustrates that, over the past five years, there has been a gradual increase in the number of certificates awarded, but over the past 12 months there has been a decline back to the level at the beginning of 2013. The overall number of certificates issued has risen from 7.4 million in the 12 months to the end of March 2010 to over 8.5 million by the end of March 2015. There was a decrease of 7 per cent in the 12 months to the end of December 2014 compared with the 12 months to the end of March 2014 (from 9.1 million to 8.5 million).

The number of certificates issued in this quarter, and in the 12-month period to each quarter end, is presented in table 2 of the appendix.

Figure 1: Number of certificates issued, January - March 2010 (2010 Q1) to January - March 2015 (2015 Q1)



Certificates by country

This quarter, 91 per cent of all certificates issued were in England, 7 per cent were in Wales and 2 per cent were in Northern Ireland (see figure 2). This distribution is consistent with previous quarters (and is consistent with the split of populations between the three countries).

Figure 2: Number of certificates issued in the quarter and in the 12 months to March 2015 by geographical area (with % change on previous period)

Country	Proportion of total	January - March 2015	% change on same qtr 2013	12 months to March 2015	% change in 12 months
England	91	1,211,750	-5	7,604,500	-8
Wales	7	93,850	-17	623,800	-6
Northern Ireland	2	31,350	4	228,600	9
Total number of certificates issued	100	1,336,950	-5.5	8,456,900	-7

There was a 4 per cent increase in the number of certificates issued in Northern Ireland this quarter compared with the same quarter of 2014, and a 9 per cent increase over the 12 months to March 2015 compared to the previous year. This is in part because of an increase in certificates awarded by Cambridge English Language Assessment. The number of certificates issued in Wales decreased by 17 per cent this quarter compared to the same quarter of 2014, while in England it decreased by 5 per cent.

Certificates by type of qualification

Figure 3 presents the number of certificates issued in this quarter and during the 12 months to the end of March 2015. Table 3 of the appendix presents the number of certificates issued since 2009/10 by type of qualification. Most certificates issued this quarter were for QCF qualifications (981,200 out of 1.34 million, or 73 per cent). Since the QCF was introduced in 2010, the number of certificates meeting QCF requirements has grown rapidly. This growth followed the Skills Funding Agency's preference to mainly fund qualifications on the QCF. Ofqual has announced its intention to withdraw the QCF rules during 2015.

The number of certificates awarded for QCF qualifications decreased by 4 per cent this quarter compared with the same quarter of 2014. This is the fourth consecutive quarter where the number of certificates awarded for QCF qualifications has decreased.

Figure 3: Number of certificates issued in this quarter and in the 12 months to March 2015 by qualification type (with % change on previous period)

Qualification type	January - March 2015	% change on same qtr 2014	12 months to March 2015	% change in 12 months
Basic skills	50	-95	1,800	-96
ESOL	72,650	-3	374,950	25
Entry level	3,150	-42	77,400	-26
Free-standing mathematics qualification	550		35,900	55
Functional skills	179,200	-8	1,019,450	4
Higher level	1,450	61	5,750	-5
Key skills	16,650	-21	113,200	-68
NVQ	700	-63	4,550	-70
Occupational qualification	0		0	-100
Other general qualification	74,750	-9	829,200	24
QCF	981,200	-4	5,825,550	-7
Vocationally related qualification	6,650	-49	169,150	-49
Total number of certificates	1,336,950	-6	8,456,900	-7

Key: ESOL: English for speakers of other languages; NVQ: National vocational qualification; QCF: Qualifications and credit framework.

The number of certificates awarded for ESOL qualifications decreased by 3 per cent compared with the same quarter of 2014. It is the first quarter in the last 12 months where the number of certificates for ESOL qualifications has decreased. The 12-month trend shows an increase of 25 per cent compared to the 12 months to the end of March 2014.

There was also a decrease in the number of certificates awarded in other general qualifications this quarter compared to the same quarter in 2014 (from 81,700 to 74,750). It is the first quarter in the last two years where there has not been an increase in the number of certificates awarded for other general qualifications. However, the number of certificates awarded in the last 12 months has increased by 24 per cent (from 669,300 to 829,200).

Further, there was a decline in the number of certificates awarded for functional skills qualifications for the first time since quarter 4 of 2012 (from 194,450 to 179,200). This decline is mainly because of a decrease in certificates awarded by Pearson Education Ltd (from 90,250 to 75,050). Part of this decline is for qualifications previously offered by EDI (from 29,800 to 21,400). All three functional skills subjects – mathematics, English and information, communication and technology (ICT) – have seen a decline in the number of certificates awarded between January – March 2015 and the same quarter of the previous year, with mathematics having the largest decline of 14 per cent (from 87,300 to 75,000). English had a slight decline of 0.4 per cent to 69,200 certificates and ICT dropped by 7 per cent to 35,000.

Certificating awarding organisations

This quarter, 155 awarding organisations issued certificates. This represents 97 per cent of the awarding organisations with available qualifications.

Figure 4 shows the ten awarding organisations that issued the most certificates this quarter, along with figures for the 12 months to quarter end. The combined total number of certificates issued by these ten organisations represents 63 per cent of all awards during this quarter (847,800 certificates in total).

Figure 4: Number of certificates issued in this quarter and in the 12 months to March 2015 for the ten awarding organisations with the most certificates (with % change on previous period)

Awarding organisation	January – March 2015	% change on same qtr 2014	12 months to March 2015	% change in 12 months
City and Guilds of London Institute	229,950	-6	1,376,450	-3
Pearson Education Ltd	202,750	-24	1,997,450	-18
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	70,800	-11	295,000	-3
OCR	70,500	-24	604,350	-25
Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	65,550	0	262,450	12
Cambridge English Language Assessment	52,600	42	216,250	28
NCFE	50,900	-9	284,450	-31
Qualsafe Awards	39,650	15	137,300	59
WJEC-CBAC	36,950	-17	253,450	3
Trinity College London	28,150	-22	178,550	30
Total number of certificates for the 10 awarding organisations	847,800	-11	5,605,750	-10

Note: Pearson Education Ltd includes awards from Edexcel and Education Development International (EDI).

Only two of the ten awarding organisations that issued the most certificates recorded increases this quarter compared with the same quarter in 2014:

- The increase in the number of certificates awarded by Qualsafe Awards (from 34,400 to 39,600) was mainly due to the increase of certificates awarded for Level 3 Award in Paediatric First Aid (QCF) (from 0 to 5,800).
- The increase in certificates awarded this quarter by Cambridge English Language Assessment was partly due to an increase in the number of certificates awarded in four Certificate in English (IELTS) (ESOL) qualifications (from 22,100 to 29,600).

Given the decrease in the number of certificates this quarter, seven out of ten organisations awarded fewer certificates this quarter compared to the same quarter last year:

- For Pearson Education Ltd, the number of BTEC certificates awarded decreased from 74,900 to 57,400. These qualifications are likely to have been impacted by changes to school performance tables. In the previous school performance tables, some BTEC qualifications that were large in terms of teaching hours were worth more than one GCSE. In the new tables, all qualifications are worth the same as one GCSE irrespective of size. Pearson Education Ltd has brought new qualifications onto the market that now match the size of GCSE qualifications. There was also a large decrease in the number of certificates awarded for qualifications previously delivered by EDI, which are in the process of being integrated with those of Pearson Education Ltd (from 86,700 to 52,250).
- For NCFE, the majority of the decrease in the number of certificates awarded was in preparation for life and work qualifications (from 20,150 to 14,750). Some of the decline was because of the withdrawal of funding for a number of qualifications. The largest decline in the preparation for life and work sector is for the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Equality and Diversity (QCF) (from 3,650 to 450). This qualification has seen declines each quarter for the last year.
- The decrease in certificates awarded by Trinity College London (from 36,150 to 28,150) was mainly in seven graded examinations in music performance qualifications (from 12,850 to 7,000).

The 50 organisations that awarded the highest numbers of qualifications this quarter are shown in table 4 of the appendix.

Certificates by level of qualification

This section presents figures on the number of certificates issued this quarter and during the 12 months to the end of March 2015, by level of qualification. Each regulated qualification has a level between entry level (which is split into three, although the figures in this document do not distinguish between the entry levels) and Level 8 (which indicates the broad level of demand of the qualification¹¹).

Figure 5 gives a breakdown of the number of certificates by level of qualification.

¹¹ Further details on comparing qualification levels are available on Ofqual's website: www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean

Figure 5: Number of certificates issued in this quarter and in the 12 months to March 2015 by qualification level (with % change on previous period)

Qualification type	January – March 2015	% change on same qtr 2014	12 months to March 2015	% change in 12 months
Entry level	148,450	-9	973,150	1
Level 1	319,050	-10	1,938,050	-15
Level 1/2	32,650	9	363,400	100
Level 2	623,500	-7	3,693,750	-14
Level 3	187,050	6	1,365,800	7
Level 4	12,050	2	59,600	-7
Level 5	9,750	48	46,000	26
Level 6	2,700	80	10,950	20
Level 7	1,600	52	5,850	-13
Level 8	100	100	300	-25
Total number of certificates	1,336,950	-6	8,456,900	-7

* Percentage is greater than 100 per cent

The number of certificates issued for Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications has declined for the seventh consecutive quarter. The decline in Level 1 qualifications this quarter compared to the same quarter in 2014 is because of a decline in the number of certificates awarded in preparation for life and work qualifications (from 182,700 to 154,550). Most of this decline was seen in qualifications delivered by Pearson Education Ltd and City and Guilds of London Institute. The same pattern was present in certificates awarded for qualifications at Level 2, with a decrease of 13 per cent in preparation for life and work qualifications (from 138,000 to 120,350) and 28 per cent in business, administration, finance and law qualifications (from 60,000 to 43,100). Most of this decline was seen in qualifications delivered by Pearson Education Ltd and OCR.

Compared to the same quarter last year, there was an increase in the number of certificates awarded for Level 1/2 qualifications. This is mainly due to an increase in Cambridge International Level 1/2 Certificate in First Language English (from 24,650 to 26,200) and AQA Level 1/2 Certificate in English Language (from 1,250 to 2,550).

As mentioned previously, the number of certificates awarded for qualifications at Level 3 increased by 6 per cent this quarter compared with the same quarter in 2014 (from 176,050 to 187,050). The increase was mainly in health, public services and care qualifications (from 54,400 to 69,600), more specifically in first aid at work qualifications and paediatric first aid qualifications. The increase in first aid at work qualifications reflects the recent requirement by the Health and Safety Executive for first aiders at work (see page 5) and the increase in paediatric first aid qualifications reflects requirements set out by the practice guidance in the Early Years Foundation Stage for Ofsted-regulated childcare.

The number of certificates awarded for Level 4 qualifications increased mainly in business, administration, finance and law (from 4,200 to 5,150), especially in the business management sector (from 1,000 to 1,750). The same pattern of increase was present for qualifications at Level 6 (from 1,500 to 2,700) with the main increase in the business management sector (from 450 to 1,450).

The number of certificates awarded for Level 5 qualifications increased this quarter (from 6,600 to 9,750). This is mainly due to an increase in Pearson’s Higher National Diplomas (from 350 to 2,150).

Table 5 of the appendix presents the number of certificates awarded in vocational qualifications by qualification level from 2009/10 to this quarter.

Certificates by qualification

This quarter, 8,296 qualifications had certificates issued, representing 39 per cent of all available qualifications. This is slightly higher than for the same quarter of 2014, when it was around 37 per cent. The 50 qualifications with the most certificates awarded this quarter are listed in table 6 of the appendix.

The ten qualifications with the highest number of certificates issued this quarter and in the 12 months to the end of March 2015 are shown in figure 6.

Figure 6: The ten qualifications with the highest number of certificates in the 12 months to the end of March 2015 (figures for the 12 months to the end of March 2014 shown for comparison)

Qualification	Number of certificates					
	January – March 2014	January – March 2015	% change quarter	12 months to the end of March 2014	12 months to the end of March 2015	% change 12 months
CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering (QCF)	39,500	34,250	-13	162,850	146,050	-10
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in First Language English	24,650	26,200	6	75,800	131,400	73
QA Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	20,200	20,900	3	50,050	75,200	50
FAA Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	13,200	15,300	16	37,800	54,400	44
HABC Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	15,200	14,900	-2	43,750	58,600	34
Cambridge English Level 1 Certificate in English (IELTS 5.5-6.5) (ESOL)	11,250	14,400	28	55,600	68,100	22
City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 1	14,750	13,500	-8	62,150	69,300	12
Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 1	14,850	12,600	-15	63,450	53,600	-16
City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2	11,450	12,300	7	51,000	72,850	43
BIIAB Level 2 Award for Personal Licence Holders (QCF)	7,900	11,750	49	30,350	41,400	36

The qualification with the most certificates issued this quarter was the CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering (QCF). The number of certificates awarded for that qualification has decreased this quarter, but in 13 of the last 14 quarters it has been the qualification with the most certificates awarded. Three of the qualifications in the list were first aid qualifications and three were functional skills qualifications.

Table 7 of the appendix shows the 20 qualifications with the greatest and least change in terms of number of certificates awarded this quarter and the associated percentage change from the same quarter in 2014.

Certificates by sector subject area of qualification

Regulated qualifications are allocated to one of 15 sector subject areas (see Ofqual's statistical publications glossary¹² for further details). This section presents figures on the number of certificates issued this quarter and during the 12 months to the end of March 2015, by the sector subject area of the qualification.

Figure 7 shows the sectors ordered by size, in terms of the number of certificates issued, with the largest sector subject area first.

The greatest number of certificates was issued in the preparation for life and work sector (406,700, representing 30 per cent of the total issued this quarter and 30 per cent of the total issued in the 12 months to the end of March 2015). There was a 12 per cent decrease in the number of certificates awarded this quarter compared to the same quarter in 2014. This decrease is mainly because of fewer students completing ESOL, functional skills, QCF and other general qualifications.

The next largest decrease this quarter compared with the same quarter in 2014 was in business, administration, finance and law (from 122,700 to 98,600). The majority of this decrease was for certificates awarded by Pearson Education Ltd (from 40,950 to 26,200) – mainly those previously awarded by EDI (from 21,050 to 11,450) and BTEC qualifications (13,900 to 10,300).

Five sector subject areas saw an increase in the number of certificates awarded this quarter compared with the same quarter of 2014: history, philosophy and theology; construction, planning and the built environment; agriculture, horticulture and animal care; arts, media and publishing; and languages, literature and culture.

As mentioned previously, the construction, planning and the built environment sector subject area has seen a 43 per cent increase in the number of certificates awarded this quarter compared with the same quarter in 2014 (from 33,350 to 47,600). This increase is the consequence of the introduction of a number of qualifications of Level 1 Award in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment qualifications (from 150 to 11,250). These are relatively new qualifications and have been developed to fulfil the requirement of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) for workers

¹² *Glossary: Statistical Publications:*

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140813095715/http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-11-26-statistics-glossary.pdf>

to have a health and safety qualification when applying for a green CSCS card – labourer card.¹³

Figure 7: Number of certificates by sector subject area of qualification in the quarter January - March 2015 and in the 12 months to the end of March 2015

Sector subject area	Number of certificates			
	January - March 2015	% change for quarter	12 months to the end of March 2015	% change for 12 months
Preparation for Life and Work	406,700	-12	2,529,900	-11
Health, Public Services and Care	259,900	0	1,204,300	5
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	133,550	-5	670,600	-8
Arts, Media and Publishing	107,750	6	894,100	1
Business, Administration, Finance and Law	98,600	-20	620,300	-9
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	73,200	-2	398,150	-7
Languages, Literature and Culture	69,650	4	434,400	-6
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	51,550	-14	456,250	-15
Information and Communication Technology	48,600	-10	462,500	-24
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	47,600	43	256,050	9
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	19,400	8	114,100	-1
Education and Training	17,600	-12	95,200	-10
Science and Mathematics	2,200	-8	284,200	2
History, Philosophy and Theology	550	450	30,850	-25
Social Sciences	100		6,050	33
Total number of certificates	1,336,950	-5.5	8,456,900	-7

¹³ www.cscs.uk.com/applying-for-cards/green-card-changes/card-type/labourer

The 6 per cent increase in the arts, media and publishing sector mainly resulted from an increase in the number of certificates awarded for qualifications in performing arts (from 91,800 to 99,050), and in turn certificates awarded by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools in performing arts qualifications (from 18,850 to 25,750).

Table 8 of the appendix presents the number of certificates awarded in vocational qualifications by sector subject area from 2009/10 to this quarter. Table 9 of the appendix gives a breakdown of the number of certificates issued this quarter, with a more detailed breakdown of the sector subject areas.

Certificates issued in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The overall number of certificates awarded in England and Wales has decreased slightly, but in Northern Ireland it has increased for the 12-month period to March 2015 (see figure 2).

Table 10 of the appendix shows the same details broken down by the sector subject area of the qualifications.

From figure 8, it can be seen that the QCF qualifications dominate in England (71 per cent), Wales (42 per cent) and Northern Ireland (62 per cent). These figures have decreased in Wales and Northern Ireland compared with the same period in 2014 and are similar in England.

The number of certificates issued for functional skills qualifications in England and Wales increased in the 12 months to the end of March 2015 compared with the same period in 2014, despite the decrease in the quarterly figures.

Figure 8: Number of certificates in the 12 months to the end of March 2015, by country and type of qualification

Qualification type	England		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total	Number	% of total
Basic skills	1,300	0.0	0	0.0	550	0.2
English for speakers of other languages	365,200	4.8	5,250	0.8	4,500	2.0
Entry Level	52,700	0.7	15,300	2.5	9,400	4.1
Free-standing mathematics qualification	35,600	0.5	250	0.0	0	0.0
Functional skills	1,009,450	13.3	9,900	1.6	150	0.1
Higher level	5,550	0.1	50	0.0	150	0.1
Key skills	19,000	0.2	84,200	13.5	10,000	4.4
NVQ	4,100	0.1	250	0.0	200	0.1
Occupational qualification	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other general qualification	529,950	7.0	239,800	38.4	59,450	26.0
QCF	5,426,350	71.4	258,700	41.5	140,500	61.5
Vocationally related qualification	155,350	2.0	10,050	1.6	3,750	1.6
Total number of certificates awarded	7,604,550	100.0	623,800	100.0	228,600	100.0

Notes:

All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero. Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

The number of certificates issued for other general qualifications for the 12 months to the end of March 2015 represents 7 per cent of the total in England, 39 per cent in Wales and 26 per cent in Northern Ireland. However, the figures are rising for this category of qualification in each country. The majority of these qualifications in Wales are in essential skills. Essential skills qualifications are the replacement qualifications for key skills and basic skills qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ICT and can be taken up to Level 2. In Northern Ireland, the increase in certificates in this category includes occupational studies qualifications offered by CCEA.

The number of ESOL certificates issued this quarter increased by 25 per cent in England, 28 per cent in Wales and 124 per cent in Northern Ireland, compared with the same period in 2014.

The number of certificates for key skills qualifications decreased in England and Wales (68 and 13.5 per cent respectively) but increased by 78 per cent in Northern Ireland (from 5,600 to 10,000). This increase in certificates was mainly in key skills qualifications offered by CCEA.

Tables 11 to 13 of the appendix present the 50 organisations that awarded the most qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in April – March 2015.

Background notes

This release presents data on available regulated vocational and other qualifications and the number of certificates issued for these (except the Advanced Extension Award, GCSEs, AS qualifications, A levels and the Diploma). The number of certificates awarded for these qualifications can be found on the Joint Council for Qualifications website.¹⁴

The data cover regulated qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, whether regulated by Ofqual, the Welsh government or CCEA (Northern Ireland regulator). The figures represent both the January – March 2015 quarter and the 12-month period to the end of March 2015.

This document is in line with Ofqual's statistics policies¹⁵ and the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*.¹⁶

A glossary of terms is available in the next section to help you interpret this release.

Data source

Information on qualifications is taken from Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications.¹⁷ The Register is used by awarding organisations to submit qualifications and maintain details of these qualifications. Ofqual uses the Register for regulatory activity. Data on available qualifications – covering title, type, awarding organisation, sector subject area and level – are taken from the Register and awarding organisations send Ofqual the associated certificates awarded. Further information on the administrative sources is available within Ofqual's statistical policies.

Each quarter, all recognised awarding organisations submit data to Ofqual about the number of certificates they have awarded in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, regardless of the age of the student and the type of school or college. Certificates are counted in the quarter when the qualification was awarded. This release shows the number of awards broken down by awarding organisation, sector subject area, type of qualification, level of qualification and country.

¹⁴ www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results

¹⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofquals-statistics-policies-and-procedures

¹⁶ www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk

¹⁷ <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>

Limitations of data

Data are collected at the earliest point available, which is the first day of the next reporting period. This reduces the time between the activity and reporting on the activity.

The main source of potential error¹⁸ is in the information provided by awarding organisations. Ofqual cannot guarantee that the number of certificates submitted is correct and there may be systematic bias when the information is sent, although awarding organisations are expected to provide the correct data. Ofqual compares the data over time and checks for systematic issues. Summary data are then sent back to awarding organisations to be checked and confirmed. The figures reported in this release reflect the certificates issued by awarding organisations at the time of data collection.

Quality assurance procedures are carried out as explained in the *Quality Assurance Framework for Statistical Publication* and the *Data Audit Framework*¹⁹ to ensure the accuracy of the data and challenge or question it, where necessary. Ofqual continually manages this process by:

- ensuring that data suppliers are clear about what is required of them, in part achieved by consulting providers during the initial design and any subsequent change phases;
- reminding all providers (if appropriate) that, as a condition of being regulated, all data must be completely accurate;
- being alert to unexpected changes in the data submitted by comparing individual returns over time from the same supplier;
- actively challenging any unexpected results with data providers;
- seeking explanations for changes and trends in the data;

¹⁸ *Statement of Administrative Sources* includes information about the potential sources of error and how Ofqual mitigates these:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/387635/2014-12-16-statement-of-administrative-sources.pdf

¹⁹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofquals-statistics-policies-and-procedures

- checking the data provided against other data either within Ofqual or available from third parties such as the Department for Education’s National Pupil Database;²⁰
- having a proportionate data auditing framework in place allowing for auditing of providers, information collection, collation and delivery processes as necessary, using a wide range of tools from questionnaires to on-site process audits.

Publication may be deferred if the statistics are not considered fit for purpose.

Comparisons in this release are mainly made with data from the same quarter of the previous year and the 12-month period up to the end of the same quarter of the previous year. This is because of seasonal changes in the number of certificates issued over the year.

After data collection, the trends are interpreted by a group of colleagues from Ofqual who are aware of the latest changes in policies. Before being released, the publication has to be signed off by the Head of Profession for Statistics who confirms the quality of the release.

Geographical coverage

In this release, Ofqual presents data on certificates issued for all regulated qualifications (excluding GCSEs, AS and A levels, Advanced Extension Award and the Diploma²¹) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland during the January – March 2015 quarter.

Statistics for Scotland are on the Scottish Qualifications Authority website.²²

Ofqual started to collect data for England, Wales and Northern Ireland individually in 2011. This release includes data about certificates awarded by country.

Revisions

Once published, data on the number of certificates issued for any qualification are not usually subject to revision, although subsequent releases may be revised to insert late data or to correct an error. Qualifications may also be re-categorised to a

²⁰ The National Pupil Database contains detailed information about pupils in schools and colleges in England.

²¹ Data for GCSEs, AS and A levels can be found on the Joint Council for Qualifications website: www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results

²² The Scottish Qualifications Authority is the national accreditation and awarding organisation in Scotland: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/64717.4239.html

different type, level, sector subject area or awarding organisation. In some cases, data may be amended to reflect the new categorisation.

The awarding organisations Edexcel and EDI merged to form Pearson Education Ltd, so qualifications by EDI no longer appear separately.

In this release, previous years' figures from one awarding organisation have been revised: City and Guilds of London Institute. The table of revision, published alongside this publication, shows the changes for each quarter by level, type of qualification and sector subject area.

Completeness of the data

Awarding organisations send data to Ofqual each quarter. Any awarding organisation that does not return a complete set of data within the collection period is contacted to make sure that the data are as complete as possible. For this quarter, Ofqual received data from all the awarding organisations that were in a position to award qualifications.

Confidentiality

To ensure confidentiality of the published accompanying data in accordance with Ofqual's *Statement on Confidentiality*,²³ the number of certificates awarded has been rounded to the nearest five. If the value is less than five, it is represented as 0~ and 0 represents zero achievements.

Rounding

In accordance with Ofqual's *Rounding Policy*,²⁴ figures in the commentary and tables for the number of certificates issued are rounded to the nearest 50 for ease of use. As a result of rounded figures, the percentages shown in any pie charts may not necessarily add up to 100. The raw data published alongside this publication is rounded to the nearest five to protect confidentiality.

²³ *Statement on Confidentiality*:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380973/2014-02-14-statement-on-confidentiality.pdf

²⁴ *Rounding Policy*:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380971/2014-02-14-rounding-policy.pdf

The numbers of qualifications have been left as exact figures because there is no issue with confidentiality and also because the numbers are so small that it aids the user to have actual figures.

Users of these statistics

This publication attracts a wide variety of users who use the statistics in various ways:

- Internal (Ofqual) users use the statistics to monitor the market, to target the resources and for input into analysis and reports.
- Central government officials use the statistics for policy implementation and ministerial briefings about government-funded further education and to draw on for their own publications.
- Awarding organisations use the statistics and underlying data as market intelligence, to monitor market share and to understand more about their competitors and product availability.
- Sector skills councils use the statistics to understand training uptake within their sectors and to assist them in understanding how the qualifications are meeting employer demand.
- Other users have varying needs, from using the information to assist in research projects to focusing on individual qualifications within their industry.

Users from central government and internal users focus on the detailed published data, as do some awarding organisations. Others draw on the aggregate official statistics and commentary to provide context.

Related statistics and publications

There are a number of related statistical releases and publications:

- The *Statistical First Release: GCSE and Equivalent Results in England 2012/13*,²⁵ published by the Department for Education, covers students' achievements in GCSEs and equivalent regulated qualifications in schools at the end of Key Stage 4.

²⁵ *Statistical First Release: GCSE and Equivalent Results in England 2012/13 (Revised)*:
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274497/SFR01_2014_FINAL.pdf

- The *Statistical First Release: A level and Other Level 3 Results in England, Academic Year 2012 to 2013*²⁶ covers achievements for 16 to 18 year olds at schools and colleges in all Level 3 qualifications. These releases can be used to add context to the trends seen in Level 2 and Level 3 GCE and GCSE equivalent qualifications.
- The quarterly *Statistical First Release*,²⁷ published by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, reports on apprenticeship volumes that cover statistics on adult (19+) government-funded participation, achievement and success rates for further education, and apprenticeships participation and achievements for all ages (16+) in England. It also shows figures on certificates issued for vocational qualifications in the UK, as collected by Ofqual and through the National Vocational Qualifications Database.

Useful information

The data behind these statistics (from July 1998 to present) are published alongside this statistical release at 9.30am on the day of release.²⁸ The data set is not revised until the next publication is released. You can find the publication schedule for the next releases on the GOV.UK website.²⁹ Ofqual's *Glossary: Statistical Publications*³⁰ provides further details on sector subject area classifications and qualification types and levels.

²⁶ *Statistical First Release: A level and Other Level 3 Results in England, Academic Year 2012 to 2013 (Revised)*:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/285082/SFR02_January_2014_FINAL_REVISED.pdf

²⁷ *Statistical First Release: Further Education & Skills: Learner Participation, Outcomes and Level of Highest Qualification Held*:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/378730/learner-participation-outcomes-and-level-of-highest-qualification-release-nov14.pdf

²⁸ www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/vocational-qualifications-dataset

²⁹

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements?utf8=%E2%9C%93&organisations%5B%5D=ofqual

³⁰ *Glossary: Statistical Publications*:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140813095715/www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-11-26-statistics-glossary.pdf>

The Register gives information on regulated qualifications and recognised awarding organisations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.³¹

User feedback

Ofqual has recently asked its user groups for feedback on this publication. Here is a summary of the improvements suggested, organised into those that have already been put in place, those that Ofqual is currently investigating and those that Ofqual will not be able to accommodate. Ahead of each publication, user feedback is reviewed to determine the content that should be included in the publication.

Ofqual has already put in place a number of suggestions:

- Round the raw data to the nearest five – rounding is needed for confidentiality. Following feedback from users that they needed the numbers of certificates to be as close to the actual figures as possible, rounding was reduced to the nearest five.
- Keep the breakdown by type of qualifications – although the majority of qualifications and certificates were for qualifications on the QCF, users still found the detailed breakdown useful.
- Provide more analysis outside the ten awarding organisations with the most certificates – comment will be made where an awarding organisation has had a significant change in certifications in relation to all certifications. Tables and published data give details on all awarding organisations.
- Provide more analysis of the major growth areas.
- Present the number of certificates awarded by second-tier sector subject area.
- List the qualifications with the strongest growth – provided in table 6 of the appendix.
- Present the number of certificates by the size of qualifications (award, certificate, diplomas) – this can be found in Ofqual's *Annual Qualifications Market Report*.³²

³¹ <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>

³² *Annual Qualifications Market Report*:
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140813095715/http://ofqual.gov.uk/standards/statistics/annual-qualification-market-report-england-wales-northern-ireland>

Ofqual will be unable to implement the following suggestions:

- Present data on graded qualifications – Ofqual does not collect information on certifications by grade achieved.
- Present data on the progression between award, certificate and diploma – Ofqual does not collect the necessary candidate-level data.
- Present the number of registrations as well as certificates – Ofqual collects the number of registrations from awarding organisations on a voluntary basis and does not have complete information.
- Present shared unit data – the data needed to carry out this analysis are not currently available.
- Present data broken down by regions within the UK – regional information is not mandatory as part of the data collection process and would add considerable burden to some awarding organisations.
- Present more information for the smaller awarding organisations on the state of the market – there are too many organisations to cover within the commentary but Ofqual does provide raw data for each qualification to enable users to do their own analysis.
- Track the effectiveness of the QCF – the data currently collected do not allow for this type of analysis.
- Present the breakdown of key awarding organisations in each sector based on the number of certificates – this is already published by Ofqual in the Annual Qualification Market Report.

The Skills Funding Agency's Individual Learner Record Database³³ and the Department for Education's National Pupil Database provide data on graded qualifications and data broken down by region. The latter also provides data on progression between award, certificate and diploma, and number of registrations.

³³ The Individualised Learner Record Database is the primary data collection on funded further education and work-based learning in England.

Glossary of terms

A levels – also known as General Certificates of Education, are currently available as advanced level qualifications (A levels) and advanced subsidiary (AS). They are the main qualifications that young people use to gain entry to university.

Accreditation – a process that reviews and confirms certification to specific criteria and standards. Ofqual no longer requires all regulated qualifications to have been accredited.

Accredited qualification – this is an old term that is sometimes used to mean ‘regulated qualification’ (see below). Ofqual now allows awarding organisations to submit most qualifications for regulation without having been accredited, so it is strictly incorrect to refer to regulated qualifications as accredited.

Active qualification – a qualification where a certificate has been awarded.

Available qualification – a qualification eligible for an award or a qualification that has made an award even if it is no longer eligible (no longer available for students to enrol on). For the purpose of this release, a qualification is available until the certification end date or if an award has been certified during the reporting period.

Awarding organisation – an organisation recognised to develop, deliver and award descriptions of qualifications.

Certificate/certification – a formal acknowledgement of a student’s achievement. This will be any award that is not graded as U, absent or X (fail).

Certification end date – the last date on which a student may be issued with a certificate of achievement for the qualification.

GCSEs – General Certificates of Secondary Education are the main school-leaving qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They are available in a range of subjects and can be studied alongside other qualifications. They are generally sat by 15 to 18 year olds in schools and colleges but are open to anyone who wants to gain a qualification.

Level – qualifications are assigned a level from entry level, then Level 1 through to Level 8 (equivalent to a doctorate), indicating the broad level of demand of the qualification.

National vocational qualifications (NVQs) – work-related, competence-based qualifications that cover a broad range of industry sectors and occupations, and are delivered in a workplace setting.

Other general qualifications – qualifications that assess a particular subject area, such as music or art, other than GCSEs, AS and A levels. These qualifications are not directly work related but may support career development. They are often structured against graded exams. The category also includes qualifications at Level 1 / Level 2, also known as IGCSEs.

Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) – a set of regulatory rules for vocational qualifications that Ofqual plans to start withdrawing from 2015 in England and Northern Ireland.

Quarter – refers to calendar quarters. Quarter 1 (Q1) refers to January – March, quarter 2 (Q2) to April – June, quarter 3 (Q3) to July – September, and quarter 4 (Q4) to October – December.

Recognition – the formal process that Ofqual operates, whereby applicants who wish to offer regulated qualifications can demonstrate that they meet the recognition criteria.³⁴ The scope of recognition is the qualifications or types of qualification that the awarding organisation is recognised to offer, which may be quite narrow or very broad depending on the type of organisation and the qualifications it wishes to offer. Recognition is a robust gateway into the regulated marketplace. Only applicants who meet the criteria in full will be recognised.

Register – the Register of Regulated Qualifications contains details of recognised awarding organisations and regulated qualifications.

Regulated qualifications – when a qualification is offered by a recognised awarding organisation within the scope of its recognition, it has to be added to the Register of qualifications and has to meet Ofqual's requirements. It is then said to be regulated. Some qualifications are subject to an accreditation requirement and have to be checked by the regulator before they can be offered as regulated qualifications.

Vocationally related qualifications – work-related, competence-based qualifications designed to give students the skills and knowledge they need to do a job. They are related to employment but, unlike NVQs, do not necessarily require a work placement.

³⁴ www.gov.uk/awarding-organisations-understanding-our-regulatory-requirements

Your feedback

Ofqual is conducting a rolling series of online surveys to help statistical releases meet your needs.

Ofqual would especially like to invite you to take part in the online survey for this release.

<http://surveys.ofqual.gov.uk/s3/vocational-and-other-qualifications-quarterly-v1>

It will take about ten minutes to complete. Your responses will remain entirely confidential in any reports published about the survey.

If you would like to take part in the survey, have any questions or would prefer a paper or large-type copy, please contact us at: statistics@ofqual.gov.uk.

Appendix

Table 1	Number of regulated vocational and other qualifications, from 2010/11 to January – March 2015
Table 2	Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications, from January – March 2009 to January – March 2015, showing certificates issued per quarter and per 12 months to quarter end
Table 3	Number of certificates issued for regulated vocational and other qualifications by type of qualification, from October – December 2010 to January – March 2015
Table 4	The 50 awarding organisations that issued the highest number of certificates in vocational and other qualifications for the quarter January – March 2015 (January – March 2014 shown for comparison)
Table 5	Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications by level of qualification, from October – December 2010 to January – March 2015
Table 6	The 50 qualifications with the most certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications for the quarter January – March 2015 (January – March 2014 shown for comparison)
Table 7	The 20 qualifications with the most and least growth in terms of number of certificates awarded for the quarter January – March 2015 (with the percentage change from January – March 2014)
Table 8	Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications by sector subject area, from October – December 2010 to January – March 2015
Table 9	Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications by second-tier sector subject area, for the quarter January – March 2015 (January – March 2014 shown for comparison)
Table 10	Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications by country and sector subject area, for the 12 months to the end of March 2015

[Table 11](#)

England – the 50 awarding organisations with the highest number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications for April – March 2015

[Table 12](#)

Wales – the 50 awarding organisations with the highest number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications for April – March 2015

[Table 13](#)

Northern Ireland – the 50 awarding organisations with the highest number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications for April – March 2015

Table 1: Number of regulated vocational and other qualifications, from 2010/11 to January – March 2015

England, Wales & Northern Ireland

Period	Basic skills	English for speakers of other languages	Entry level	Free-standing mathematics qualification	Functional skills	Higher level	Key skills	National vocational qualification	Occupational qualification	Other general qualification	QCF	Vocationally related qualification	Total number of qualifications
2010/11	88	186	367	22	210	554	377	1,606	94	762	9,693	2,395	16,354
2011/12	88	186	341	20	211	493	377	1,440	87	804	12,757	2,153	18,957
2012/13	80	192	302	14	235	421	368	1,162	85	831	16,729	1,702	22,121
2013/14	33	197	280	14	240	363	192	672	68	817	19,469	1,126	23,471
2014/15	10	201	186	14	215	138	125	146	2	596	19,438	532	21,603
Oct-Dec 2010	83	170	324	22	183	552	356	1,604	94	715	6,678	2,388	13,169
Jan-Mar 2011	83	185	330	22	184	544	356	1,556	94	712	7,569	2,325	13,960
Apr-Jun 2011	88	185	340	22	191	533	362	1,537	94	712	8,607	2,306	14,977
Jul-Sep 2011	88	185	362	22	203	506	377	1,518	94	754	9,622	2,277	16,008
Oct-Dec 2011	88	177	334	20	208	487	377	1,432	87	722	10,410	2,112	16,454
Jan-Mar 2012	88	183	321	20	208	447	377	1,349	86	693	11,045	2,003	16,820
Apr-Jun 2012	88	185	316	20	207	422	368	1,305	86	678	11,661	1,969	17,305
Jul-Sep 2012	88	186	319	20	206	418	368	1,282	86	752	12,605	1,957	18,287
Oct-Dec 2012	80	185	297	14	193	414	368	1,148	85	758	13,278	1,662	18,482
Jan-Mar 2013	80	190	292	14	202	411	368	939	77	739	14,142	1,401	18,855
Apr-Jun 2013	80	188	292	14	222	408	359	841	77	737	14,927	1,285	19,430
Jul-Sep 2013	80	189	296	14	232	405	359	788	71	785	16,291	1,268	20,778
Oct-Dec 2013	32	189	279	7	238	355	191	652	68	774	17,026	1,032	20,843
Jan-Mar 2014	22	191	274	7	237	221	165	391	20	740	17,345	579	20,192
Apr-Jun 2014	22	187	196	7	239	140	133	240	9	564	17,501	486	19,724
Jul-Sep 2014	22	189	195	14	239	144	135	197	1	598	18,742	514	20,990
Oct-Dec 2014	10	185	186	14	215	125	125	142	1	595	18,908	501	21,007
Jan-Mar 2015	10	195	165	14	215	109	116	94	1	559	19,141	424	21,043

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.
3. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to September.

Table 2: Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications, from January – March 2010 to January – March 2015, showing certificates issued per quarter and per 12 months to quarter end

England, Wales and Northern Ireland		
Period	Total number of certificates issued	
	Quarter	12 months to quarter end
Jan – Mar 2010	1,284,950	7,431,050
Apr – Jun 2010	1,979,300	7,580,350
Jul – Sep 2010	3,515,750	7,955,300
Oct – Dec 2010	1,169,300	7,949,300
Jan – Mar 2011	1,267,300	7,931,650
Apr – Jun 2011	1,911,100	7,863,450
Jul – Sep 2011	3,548,000	7,895,700
Oct – Dec 2011	1,271,400	7,997,800
Jan – Mar 2012	1,384,550	8,115,050
Apr – Jun 2012	2,116,500	8,320,400
Jul – Sep 2012	4,013,150	8,785,600
Oct – Dec 2012	1,345,250	8,859,400
Jan – Mar 2013	1,421,700	8,896,600
Apr – Jun 2013	2,463,950	9,244,050
Jul – Sep 2013	3,953,750	9,184,650
Oct – Dec 2013	1,279,450	9,118,850
Jan – Mar 2014	1,415,250	9,112,400
Apr – Jun 2014	2,143,150	8,791,600
Jul – Sep 2014	3,695,300	8,533,150
Oct – Dec 2014	1,281,500	8,535,200
Jan – Mar 2015	1,336,950	8,456,900

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50.

Table 3: Number of certificates issued for regulated vocational and other qualifications by type of qualification, from October – December 2010 to January – March 2015

England, Wales & Northern Ireland

Period	Basic skills	English for speakers of other languages	Entry level	Free-standing mathematics qualification	Functional skills	Higher level	Key skills	NVQ	Occupational qualification	Other general qualification	QCF	Vocationally related qualification	Total number of certificates
10-11	611,550	273,950	160,100	25,500	562,550	30,300	618,400	587,750	17,500	767,600	2,836,850	1,399,650	7,895,700
11-12	512,950	275,900	114,750	22,950	664,700	16,850	659,200	128,850	4,600	525,750	5,283,350	575,850	8,785,600
12-13	101,750	287,650	102,550	23,150	864,600	7,600	545,600	28,750	550	638,500	6,235,850	348,150	9,184,650
13-14	4,600	356,250	80,800	35,800	1,021,350	5,250	122,800	7,800	100	834,250	5,884,500	179,700	8,533,150
14-15	100	135,050	6,550	550	342,250	3,050	19,750	1,700	0	106,050	1,988,600	14,800	2,618,400
Oct-Dec 2010	126,650	42,750	4,650	0	9,600	6,800	120,500	179,600	6,200	108,250	274,800	285,750	1,169,300
Jan-Mar 2011	170,800	62,350	7,350	1,550	62,700	7,500	124,050	155,250	4,050	49,950	455,100	166,350	1,267,300
Apr-Jun 2011	175,300	53,750	22,500	0	156,050	3,900	130,600	128,600	3,600	128,800	722,300	385,750	1,911,100
Jul-Sep 2011	138,800	115,100	125,600	23,900	334,300	12,100	243,250	124,300	3,600	480,650	1,384,650	561,800	3,548,000
Oct-Dec 2011	99,650	52,250	3,450	0	70,600	4,000	108,300	51,000	2,000	17,050	807,250	55,850	1,271,400
Jan-Mar 2012	127,500	67,900	6,100	500	96,800	3,600	130,850	31,100	1,000	46,450	821,450	51,250	1,384,550
Apr-Jun 2012	151,200	61,250	14,450	0	192,050	2,500	180,800	22,600	700	70,000	1,225,900	195,050	2,116,500
Jul-Sep 2012	134,550	94,500	90,750	22,450	305,300	6,700	239,250	24,150	900	392,250	2,428,700	273,650	4,013,150
Oct-Dec 2012	33,450	45,750	3,100	0	87,250	2,000	107,900	11,750	250	16,400	1,016,250	21,100	1,345,250
Jan-Mar 2013	23,700	58,550	5,050	550	136,850	2,050	116,300	6,700	150	63,900	985,400	22,500	1,421,700
Apr-Jun 2013	23,800	74,750	16,700	500	256,500	1,350	137,000	5,150	100	76,700	1,728,700	142,600	2,463,950
Jul-Sep 2013	20,850	108,600	77,700	22,150	383,950	2,150	184,350	5,100	50	481,500	2,505,450	161,900	3,953,750
Oct-Dec 2013	1,850	41,800	4,600	0	149,700	1,650	8,250	3,000	50	29,400	1,026,700	12,400	1,279,450
Jan-Mar 2014	1,000	74,550	5,400	500	194,450	900	21,150	1,900	0	81,700	1,020,800	12,950	1,415,250
Apr-Jun 2014	1,050	96,450	12,650	500	286,500	1,050	38,700	1,450	0	89,700	1,539,600	75,500	2,143,150
Jul-Sep 2014	700	143,450	58,200	34,800	390,750	1,650	54,750	1,400	0	633,450	2,297,350	78,850	3,695,300
Oct-Dec 2014	50	62,400	3,400	0	163,050	1,650	3,100	1,000	0	31,300	1,007,350	8,150	1,281,500
Jan-Mar 2015	50	72,650	3,150	550	179,200	1,450	16,650	700	0	74,750	981,200	6,650	1,336,950

Notes:

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero-. Zero represent no achievements.

Table 4: The 50 awarding organisations that issued the highest number of certificates in vocational and other qualifications for the quarter January – March 2015 (January – March 2014 shown for comparison)

England, Wales & Northern Ireland	Total number of certificates issued (for the quarter)	
	January – March 2014	January – March 2015
City and Guilds of London Institute	245,700	229,950
Pearson Education Ltd	266,000	202,750
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	79,450	70,800
OCR	92,150	70,500
Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	65,500	65,550
Cambridge English Language Assessment	36,950	52,600
NCFE	56,200	50,900
Qualsafe Awards	34,400	39,650
WJEC-CBAC	44,500	36,950
Trinity College London	36,150	28,150
Cambridge International Examinations	25,400	27,900
Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music	18,850	25,750
BOS, The Chartered Institute for IT	19,650	24,250
First Aid Awards Ltd	20,300	23,750
BIAB	14,000	18,700
NOCN	24,750	18,000
Excellence, Achievement & Learning Limited	17,900	16,950
Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing	15,250	15,500
1st4sport Qualifications	12,050	12,850
Royal Academy of Dance	11,650	12,700
Cskills Awards	10,250	11,600
Active IQ	7,800	11,600
Training Qualifications UK Ltd	4,000	11,350
LAMDA	8,650	10,850
Ascentis	12,450	10,100
Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education	9,600	10,050
Royal Society for Public Health	7,900	9,750
AoFA Qualifications	9,650	9,500
AQA Education	8,650	9,300
Institute of Leadership & Management	8,900	8,850
British Safety Council	5,750	8,250
Skillfirst Awards Ltd	8,950	7,550
Sports Leaders UK	11,050	7,350
Lifetime Awarding	10,650	6,800
Institute of Qualified Lifeguards	9,950	6,750
International Dance Teachers Association	5,400	6,700
Rock School Ltd	6,150	6,650
Association of Accounting Technicians	6,200	6,200
IMI Awards Ltd	6,100	6,200
Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd	3,950	5,500
University of West London	3,200	5,100
Chartered Management Institute	3,550	4,850
Industry Qualifications	4,100	4,500
English Speaking Board (International) Ltd	3,800	4,400
VTCT	4,300	4,350
Central YMCA Qualifications	4,500	4,050
Safety Training Awards	4,300	4,000
Open College Network Eastern Region trading as Gateway Qualifications	3,100	4,000
The Learning Machine	2,300	3,700
Open College Network West Midlands Region	1,350	3,400

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.

Table 5: Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications by level of qualification, from October – December 2010 to January – March 2015

England, Wales & Northern Ireland

	Entry level	Level 1	Level 1/2	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Total number of achievements
10-11	776,950	2,028,850	7,950	3,909,500	1,042,850	78,300	35,650	9,150	6,250	200	7,895,700
11-12	887,400	2,283,400	37,400	4,325,500	1,122,500	74,950	34,950	9,550	9,600	300	8,785,600
12-13	932,350	2,400,100	147,600	4,329,000	1,249,750	70,900	36,450	10,900	7,150	400	9,184,650
13-14	972,600	1,991,800	364,650	3,749,350	1,339,100	58,500	41,350	9,800	5,700	300	8,533,150
14-15	287,350	652,400	36,400	1,222,150	369,350	24,650	18,450	4,600	2,950	150	2,618,400
Oct-Dec 2010	61,650	317,100	0	605,400	160,100	15,700	6,200	1,650	1,450	100	1,169,300
Jan-Mar 2011	103,850	315,600	0	659,300	159,900	18,150	7,450	1,450	1,550	50	1,267,300
Apr-Jun 2011	160,250	487,700	0	1,029,900	207,100	16,750	6,350	1,850	1,150	0	1,911,100
Jul-Sep 2011	451,200	908,450	7,950	1,614,850	515,750	27,700	15,700	4,200	2,100	100	3,548,000
Oct-Dec 2011	115,450	361,550	0	621,000	146,900	15,100	6,950	1,550	2,850	50	1,271,400
Jan-Mar 2012	128,050	394,600	1,200	682,500	150,600	15,200	7,100	2,950	2,250	100	1,384,550
Apr-Jun 2012	185,850	561,550	0	1,121,050	221,000	16,500	6,950	1,500	2,050	50	2,116,500
Jul-Sep 2012	458,050	965,750	36,200	1,900,950	603,950	28,150	13,950	3,550	2,500	50	4,013,150
Oct-Dec 2012	122,850	403,050	0	634,200	158,100	16,400	6,500	2,400	1,700	50	1,345,250
Jan-Mar 2013	134,000	421,250	8,850	671,750	159,800	14,300	7,350	2,800	1,450	100	1,421,700
Apr-Jun 2013	223,350	620,850	0	1,295,000	299,900	14,050	7,750	1,650	1,250	100	2,463,950
Jul-Sep 2013	452,200	954,950	138,750	1,728,100	631,950	26,150	14,850	4,050	2,700	100	3,953,750
Oct-Dec 2013	123,800	352,550	7,700	606,050	166,600	11,750	7,200	1,950	1,750	100	1,279,450
Jan-Mar 2014	163,000	353,550	29,950	671,650	176,050	11,800	6,600	1,500	1,050	50	1,415,250
Apr-Jun 2014	230,100	504,600	8,350	1,061,500	314,300	12,100	8,800	2,350	1,050	50	2,143,150
Jul-Sep 2014	455,700	781,100	318,650	1,410,100	682,100	22,900	18,750	4,050	1,850	50	3,695,300
Oct-Dec 2014	138,900	333,300	3,750	598,650	182,300	12,600	8,700	1,900	1,350	50	1,281,500
Jan-Mar 2015	148,450	319,050	32,650	623,500	187,050	12,050	9,750	2,700	1,600	100	1,336,950

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.
3. Annual data are for academic years, that is October to September.

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero-. Zero represent no achievements. Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

Table 6: The 50 qualifications with the most certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications for the quarter January – March 2015 (January – March 2014 shown for comparison)

England, Wales & Northern Ireland

Qualification	Total number of certificates issued (for the quarter)	
	January – March 2014	January – March 2015
CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering (QCF)	39,500	34,250
Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in First Language English	24,650	26,200
QA Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	20,200	20,900
FAA Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	13,200	15,300
HABC Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	15,200	14,900
Cambridge English Level 1 Certificate in English (IELTS 5.5-6.5) (ESOL)	11,250	14,400
City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 1	14,750	13,500
Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 1	14,850	12,600
City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2	11,450	12,300
BIAB Level 2 Award for Personal Licence Holders (QCF)	7,900	11,750
City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 1	10,300	11,150
City & Guilds Level 2 Award in Functional Skills Mathematics	11,050	10,200
BCS Level 2 ECDL Certificate in IT Application Skills (QCF)	450	9,650
Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 2	12,000	9,500
QA Level 3 Award in First Aid at Work (QCF)	8,750	9,250
Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 1	10,100	9,250
HABC Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering (QCF)	9,650	9,200
CIEH Level 2 Award in Health and Safety in the Workplace (QCF)	10,150	9,050
TCL Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International - Speaking and Listening (Entry 3)	9,050	8,250
Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2	8,950	8,050
Cambridge English Level 2 Certificate in English (IELTS 7.0-8.0) (ESOL)	6,200	7,700
CIEH Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	7,650	7,400
WJEC Level 2 Essential Skills Wales in Communication	5,850	6,850
ABRSM Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 1) (QCF)	4,500	6,600
Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Level 2	5,400	6,400
Cambridge English Entry Level Certificate in English (IELTS 4.0-5.0) (Entry 3) (ESOL)	3,750	6,350
QA Level 3 Award in Paediatric First Aid (QCF)	0	5,800
City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Level 2	6,050	5,550
Pearson EDI Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 1	6,550	5,550
AOFAQ Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	6,150	5,500
TQUK Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	2,350	5,450
WJEC Level 2 Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	7,350	5,300
1st4sport Level 1 Award in Coaching Football (QCF)	5,200	5,200
Sports Leaders UK Level 1 Award in Sports Leadership (QCF)	6,950	4,850
RSPH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering (QCF)	3,950	4,700
Pearson EDI Functional Skills qualification in mathematics at level 1	7,250	4,650
City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Level 1	5,100	4,600
BSC Level 1 Award in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment (QCF)	0	4,600
ABRSM Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 2) (QCF)	3,250	4,600
CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety for Manufacturing (QCF)	4,700	4,450
HABC Level 2 Award in Health and Safety in the Workplace (QCF)	3,150	4,350
IQL Level 2 Award in Pool Lifeguarding, Intervention, Supervision and Rescue (QCF)	7,800	4,350
City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in mathematics at Entry 3	4,000	4,300
HABC Level 3 Award In First Aid at Work (QCF)	4,750	4,250
Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Level 1	3,550	4,200
FAA Level 3 Award In First Aid at Work (QCF)	3,800	4,050
Pearson EDI Functional Skills qualification in mathematics at Level 2	5,850	3,950
Pearson EDI Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2	4,450	3,900
ABRSM Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 3) (QCF)	2,950	3,850
ISTD Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Dance: Grade 1 (QCF)	3,700	3,850

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero-. Zero represent no achievements.

Table 7: The 20 qualifications with the most and least growth in terms of number of certificates awarded for the quarter January – March 2015 (with the percentage change from January – March 2014)

England, Wales & Northern Ireland		Number of certificates		Percentage change (from January - March 2014)
J		January – March 2014	January – March 2015	
Less than 500 certificates	Cambridge English Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (reading) (Entry 1) (QCF)	0	500	
	Cambridge English Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (speaking and listening) (Entry 1) (QCF)	0	500	
	Cambridge English Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (writing) (Entry 1) (QCF)	0	500	
	City & Guilds Entry Level Extended Award in Employability Skills (Entry 3) (QCF)	0	500	
	NOCN Level 2 Award for Working as a Door Supervisor within the Private Security Industry (QCF)	0	450	
	NOCN Level 1 Award for Trade Union Representatives (QCF)	0	450	
	BIAB Level 2 Award for Upskilling a Door Supervisor within the Private Security Industry (QCF)	0	450	
	City & Guilds Level 2 Award In Safe Application of Pesticides Using Self Propelled, Mounted or Trailed Horizontal Boom Sprayers (QCF)	0	450	
	FAQ Entry Level Certificate in Employability Skills (Entry 3) (QCF)	0	450	
	Ascentis Entry Level Certificate in Mathematical Skills (Entry 3) (QCF)	0	450	
	GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3)	4,500	0	-100
	BSC Level 1 Award in Health and Safety at Work (QCF)	4,050	150	-97
	Pearson EDI Level 2 Award for Personal Licence Holders (QCF)	3,700	0	-99
	OCR Level 2 National First Award in ICT	3,700	100	-98
	QA Level 2 Award in Paediatric First Aid (QCF)	3,650	0	-100
	NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Equality and Diversity (QCF)	3,650	450	-87
	LAO Level 2 Certificate in Principles of Business and Administration (QCF)	3,200	100	-97
	City & Guilds Level 1 Certificate in Employability and Personal Development (QCF)	3,000	200	-94
	City & Guilds Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Spoken)	2,500	200	-93
	City & Guilds Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (reading, writing and listening)	2,400	50	-97
Between 500 – 4,999 certificates	BSC Level 1 Award in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment (QCF)	0	4,600	
	Pearson Edexcel Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (speaking and listening) (Entry 3) (QCF)	0	3,550	
	City & Guilds Level 1 Certificate in Employability Skills (QCF)	0	3,450	
	NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Dignity and Safeguarding in Adult Health and Social Care (QCF)	0	3,150	
	HABC Level 2 Award for Working as a Door Supervisor within the Private Security Industry (QCF)	0	2,850	
	City & Guilds Level 1 Award in Employability Skills (QCF)	0	2,350	
	RAD Entry Level Award In Graded Examination in Dance: Primary in Dance (VRQ)	0	2,250	
	HABC Level 3 Award In Paediatric First Aid (QCF)	0	2,150	
	BIAB Level 2 Award In Beer and Cask Quality (Cask and Keg) (QCF)	0	2,100	
	City & Guilds Level 3 Award In The Requirements for Electrical Installations BS7671: 2008 (2015) (QCF)	0	2,050	
	HABC Level 2 Award in Door Supervision (QCF)	5,350	1,100	-79
	BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills (ECDL Extra) (ITQ) (QCF)	6,150	2,400	-61
	QL Level 2 Award in Pool Lifeguarding, Intervention, Supervision and Rescue (QCF)	7,800	4,350	-44
	Pearson Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 3)	4,550	1,350	-70
	Pearson EDI Functional Skills qualification in mathematics at level 1	7,250	4,650	-36
	BCS Level 1 Award in IT User Skills (ECDL Essentials) (ITQ) (QCF)	4,450	1,850	-58
	Pearson BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Customer Service (QCF)	4,200	1,700	-59
	Pearson BTEC Level 2 Award in Door Supervision (QCF)	2,950	600	-79
	Pearson BTEC Level 1 Award in WorkSkills (QCF)	4,100	1,750	-58
	City & Guilds Entry Level Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 3)	3,050	850	-73
5,000 certificates and above	BCS Level 2 ECDL Certificate in IT Application Skills (QCF)	450	9,650	>150
	QA Level 3 Award in Paediatric First Aid (QCF)	0	5,800	
	BIAB Level 2 Award for Personal Licence Holders (QCF)	7,900	11,750	49
	Cambridge English Level 1 Certificate in English (IELTS 5.5-6.5) (ESOL)	11,250	14,400	28
	TQUK Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	2,350	5,450	134
	Cambridge English Entry Level Certificate in English (IELTS 4.0-5.0) (Entry 3) (ESOL)	3,750	6,350	69
	ABRSM Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 1) (QCF)	4,500	6,600	47
	FAA Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (QCF)	13,200	15,300	16
	Cambridge International Level 1/Level 2 Certificate in First Language English	24,650	26,200	6
	Cambridge English Level 2 Certificate in English (IELTS 7.0-8.0) (ESOL)	6,200	7,700	24
	CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering (QCF)	39,500	34,250	-13
	Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 2	12,000	9,500	-21
	Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 1	14,850	12,600	-15
	WJEC Level 2 Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	7,350	5,300	-28
	City & Guilds Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 1	14,750	13,500	-9
	CIEH Level 2 Award in Health and Safety in the Workplace (QCF)	10,150	9,050	-11
	Pearson EDI Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 1	6,550	5,550	-15
	City & Guilds Level 2 Award in Functional Skills Mathematics	11,050	10,200	-8
	Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2	8,950	8,050	-10
	Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 1	10,100	9,250	-8

Table 8: Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications by sector subject area, from October – December 2010 to January – March 2015

England, Wales & Northern Ireland

	Health, public services and care	Science and mathematics	Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Construction, planning and the built environment	Information and communication technology	Retail and commercial enterprise	Leisure, travel and tourism	Arts, media and publishing	History, philosophy and theology	Social sciences	Languages, literature and culture	Education and training	Preparation for life and work	Business, administration, finance and law	Total number of certificates issued
10-11	790,050	166,800	120,450	417,550	213,300	607,100	690,650	489,200	779,100	45,650	4,450	390,050	107,350	2,534,650	539,300	7,895,700
11-12	795,600	227,150	118,750	416,150	239,150	649,800	784,900	528,300	883,500	46,550	4,200	387,650	96,800	2,962,250	644,950	8,785,600
12-13	1,024,700	280,250	120,100	439,900	243,050	631,200	753,750	547,800	896,400	41,400	4,700	436,500	106,550	2,961,450	696,950	9,184,650
13-14	1,183,250	287,800	111,450	401,000	232,500	480,100	687,350	475,000	882,500	30,200	6,000	433,350	99,650	2,575,550	647,450	8,533,150
14-15	502,100	3,800	37,350	146,100	93,100	88,650	269,450	112,000	244,450	850	150	102,700	34,450	775,300	207,950	2,618,400
Oct-Dec 2010	213,500	1,500	17,350	61,550	32,900	43,750	107,500	72,750	140,450	750	100	27,700	21,500	332,100	95,900	1,169,300
Jan-Mar 2011	152,550	3,000	9,500	88,250	29,650	67,500	165,700	71,950	73,300	50	150	43,750	23,250	431,500	107,100	1,267,300
Apr-Jun 2011	172,950	45,900	37,500	98,600	50,550	179,850	170,250	126,850	206,400	3,100	100	74,250	24,650	584,900	135,150	1,911,100
Jul-Sep 2011	251,050	116,400	56,100	169,200	100,200	316,000	247,200	217,650	358,950	41,700	4,100	244,300	37,950	1,186,100	201,150	3,548,000
Oct-Dec 2011	140,350	1,900	20,500	79,500	36,300	48,150	170,300	70,550	126,000	550	250	43,800	17,000	407,600	108,650	1,271,400
Jan-Mar 2012	134,350	3,100	20,000	69,700	37,550	71,700	162,600	60,850	106,950	150	150	47,650	20,400	527,150	122,200	1,384,550
Apr-Jun 2012	191,200	45,050	27,100	87,450	53,000	189,850	177,050	130,850	222,550	50	50	73,100	22,300	744,150	152,700	2,116,500
Jul-Sep 2012	329,700	177,100	51,150	179,500	112,250	340,100	274,900	266,050	427,950	45,800	3,750	223,100	37,100	1,283,350	261,400	4,013,150
Oct-Dec 2012	175,400	1,950	18,050	81,500	42,150	58,300	159,650	81,150	131,800	250	100	29,750	18,850	423,700	122,600	1,345,250
Jan-Mar 2013	187,900	8,100	21,300	78,400	36,050	73,950	148,150	62,350	114,250	150	150	44,500	20,350	500,700	125,350	1,421,700
Apr-Jun 2013	289,750	82,450	30,000	101,550	58,200	201,150	182,000	176,350	258,250	150	50	84,700	23,800	782,000	193,600	2,463,950
Jul-Sep 2013	371,650	187,800	50,750	178,450	106,650	297,800	263,950	227,950	392,100	40,850	4,400	277,550	43,500	1,255,000	255,350	3,953,750
Oct-Dec 2013	221,750	4,950	16,800	74,650	36,200	52,100	146,000	71,100	131,500	50	0	34,500	19,000	358,450	112,400	1,279,450
Jan-Mar 2014	259,350	2,400	17,900	74,350	33,350	54,100	140,250	59,650	101,350	100	100	67,150	19,950	462,500	122,700	1,415,250
Apr-Jun 2014	308,600	47,200	28,750	90,250	52,550	143,250	167,300	137,400	252,600	8,700	50	63,250	22,550	650,600	170,100	2,143,150
Jul-Sep 2014	393,600	233,200	48,000	161,800	110,400	230,600	233,800	206,800	397,050	21,350	5,850	268,450	38,200	1,104,000	242,250	3,695,300
Oct-Dec 2014	242,150	1,600	17,950	72,950	45,500	40,050	135,900	60,450	136,700	300	50	33,050	16,850	368,650	109,400	1,281,500
Jan-Mar 2015	259,900	2,200	19,400	73,200	47,600	48,600	133,550	51,550	107,750	550	100	69,650	17,600	406,700	98,600	1,336,950

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero-. Zero represent no achievements. Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

Table 9: Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications by second-tier sector subject area, for the quarter January – March 2015 (January – March 2014 shown for comparison)

Sector subject area	Total number of certificates issued (for the quarter)	
	January – March 2014	January – March 2015
	01.1 Medicine and dentistry	0
01.2 Nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine	1,150	1,550
01.3 Health and social care	211,850	220,250
01.4 Public services	36,050	27,450
01.5 Child development and well-being	10,250	10,650
02.1 Science	1,750	1,200
02.2 Mathematics and statistics	650	1,000
03.1 Agriculture	4,750	4,650
03.2 Horticulture and forestry	7,800	10,850
03.3 Animal care and veterinary science	3,750	2,900
03.4 Environmental conservation	1,600	1,000
04.1 Engineering	20,200	21,350
04.2 Manufacturing technologies	40,150	38,050
04.3 Transportation operations and maintenance	13,950	13,800
05.1 Architecture	0	0
05.2 Building and construction	33,350	47,600
05.3 Urban, rural and regional planning	0	0
06.1 ICT practitioners	4,400	5,350
06.2 ICT for users	49,700	43,250
07.1 Retailing and wholesaling	12,900	11,850
07.2 Warehousing and distribution	10,900	9,350
07.3 Service enterprises	18,700	15,800
07.4 Hospitality and catering	97,800	96,550
08.1 Sport, leisure and recreation	59,100	51,150
08.2 Travel and tourism	600	400
09.1 Performing arts	91,800	99,050
09.2 Crafts, creative arts and design	7,150	6,950
09.3 Media and communication	2,150	1,600
09.4 Publishing and information services	250	200
10.1 History	0~	50
10.2 Archaeology and archaeological sciences	0~	0~
10.3 Philosophy	50	450
10.4 Theology and religious studies	0~	100
11.1 Geography	50	50
11.2 Sociology and social policy	0~	50
11.3 Politics	0~	0
11.4 Economics	50	50
12.1 Languages, literature and culture of the British Isles	63,800	67,350
12.2 Other languages, literature and culture	3,350	2,300
13.1 Teaching and lecturing	12,350	10,650
13.2 Direct learning support	7,600	6,950
14.1 Foundations for learning and life	401,250	374,600
14.2 Preparation for work	61,300	32,050
15.1 Accounting and finance	17,850	16,850
15.2 Administration	61,750	43,800
15.3 Business management	40,650	36,100
15.4 Marketing and sales	2,200	1,800
15.5 Law and legal services	250	50

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero~. Zero represent no achievements.

Table 10: Total number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications by country and sector subject area, for the 12 months to the end of March 2015

Qualification type	England		Wales		Northern Ireland	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total	Number	% of total
Basic skills	1,300	0.0	0	0.0	550	0.2
English for speakers of other languages	365,200	4.8	5,250	0.8	4,500	2.0
Entry Level	52,700	0.7	15,300	2.5	9,400	4.1
Free-standing mathematics qualification	35,600	0.5	250	0.0	0	0.0
Functional skills	1,009,450	13.3	9,900	1.6	150	0.1
Higher level	5,550	0.1	50	0.0	150	0.1
Key skills	19,000	0.2	84,200	13.5	10,000	4.4
NVQ	4,100	0.1	250	0.0	200	0.1
Occupational qualification	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other general qualification	529,950	7.0	239,800	38.4	8	0.0
QCF	5,426,350	71.4	258,700	41.5	140,500	61.5
Vocationally related qualification	155,350	2.0	10,050	1.6	3,750	1.6
Total number of certificates awarded	7,604,550	100.0	623,800	100.0	228,600	100.0

Notes:

All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero. Figures have been rounded independently so may not sum to the total.

Table 11: England – the 50 awarding organisations with the highest number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications for April – March 2015

England only	
Awarding organisation	Total number of certificates issued (for the 12 months to quarter end)
	April – March 2015
Pearson Education Ltd	1,927,750
City and Guilds of London Institute	1,189,550
OCR	551,150
NCFE	280,150
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	250,100
Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music	247,150
Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	239,200
AQA Education	209,900
Cambridge English Language Assessment	207,350
Trinity College London	168,950
Cambridge International Examinations	168,050
Qualsafe Awards	130,350
NOCN	103,300
First Aid Awards Ltd	83,050
BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT	80,050
Excellence, Achievement & Learning Limited	79,100
Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education	73,450
Sports Leaders UK	69,450
Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing	69,350
Cskills Awards	68,650
LAMDA	63,200
BIIAB	63,100
1st4sport Qualifications	54,800
Ascentis	52,750
IMI Awards Ltd	44,600
VTCT	44,350
Open College Network Eastern Region trading as Gateway Qualifications	44,200
Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network	41,700
Association of Accounting Technicians	39,650
Active IQ	39,350
Royal Academy of Dance	37,150
International Baccalaureate Organisation	35,100
Institute of Leadership & Management	34,000
Royal Society for Public Health	32,450
Skillsfirst Awards Ltd	32,350
International Dance Teachers Association	32,350
Lifetime Awarding	30,800
Institute of Qualified Lifeguards	29,650
Training Qualifications UK Ltd	28,850
Rock School Ltd	26,850
ABC Awards	25,650
AoFA Qualifications	25,300
British Safety Council	25,150
Central YMCA Qualifications	21,650
WJEC-CBAC	20,650
AptEd	20,500
AIM Awards	20,400
ifs University College (previously known as ifs School of Finance)	19,300
Industry Qualifications	19,050
Chartered Management Institute	18,100

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero~. Zero represent no achievements.

Table 12: Wales – the 50 awarding organisations with the highest number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications for April – March 2015

Awarding organisation	Total number of certificates issued (for the 12 months to quarter end) April – March 2015
WJEC-CBAC	232,800
City and Guilds of London Institute	124,300
Pearson Education Ltd	52,500
OCR	43,350
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	27,950
Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	19,700
Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music	13,400
Excellence, Achievement & Learning Limited	10,650
Agored Cymru	6,700
Qualsafe Awards	5,900
VTCT	5,450
Cambridge English Language Assessment	4,550
Cskills Awards	4,300
Institute of Leadership & Management	4,300
AoFA Qualifications	3,550
Royal Society for Public Health	3,500
Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education	3,450
NOCN	3,350
Safety Training Awards	3,000
Trinity College London	2,900
BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT	2,850
NCFE	2,500
IMI Awards Ltd	2,500
Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing	2,350
Sports Leaders UK	2,350
First Aid Awards Ltd	2,150
AQA Education	2,150
1st4sport Qualifications	2,100
Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network	1,950
Institute of Qualified Lifeguards	1,750
International Baccalaureate Organisation	1,750
ifs University College (previously known as ifs School of Finance)	1,750
BIIAB	1,700
British Safety Council	1,700
Association of Accounting Technicians	1,650
Active IQ	1,600
Rock School Ltd	1,300
Central YMCA Qualifications	1,300
University of West London	1,200
Royal Academy of Dance	1,100
WAMITAB	850
ABC Awards	750
Equestrian Qualifications Limited	700
Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd	550
Amateur Swimming Association	500
FDQ Limited	450
British Institute of Facilities Management	450
Scottish Qualifications Authority trading as SQA	400
Training Qualifications UK Ltd	350
Chartered Management Institute	350

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero~. Zero represent no achievements.

Table 13: Northern Ireland – the 50 awarding organisations with the highest number of certificates issued in vocational and other qualifications for April – March 2015

Northern Ireland only	
Awarding organisation	Total number of certificates issued (for the 12 months to quarter end) April – March 2015
City and Guilds of London Institute	62,600
Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment	49,100
Pearson Education Ltd	17,150
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	16,950
Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music	11,400
OCR	9,850
Trinity College London	6,700
Cambridge English Language Assessment	4,350
Open College Network Northern Ireland	4,250
University of West London	4,050
Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance	3,550
Cskills Awards	2,750
NOCN	2,650
Institute of Leadership & Management	2,450
AQA Education	2,150
New Era Academy of Drama and Music (London) Ltd	2,000
NCFE	1,750
iCan Qualifications Limited	1,650
Royal Academy of Dance	1,350
Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network	1,300
Active IQ	1,300
Rock School Ltd	1,200
Royal Society for Public Health	1,150
Qualsafe Awards	1,050
First Aid Awards Ltd	1,050
ETC Awards Limited	950
Institute of Qualified Lifeguards	900
Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body	850
BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT	800
VTCT	750
IMI Awards Ltd	750
Prince's Trust	600
WSET Awards	600
Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing	550
AoFA Qualifications	550
ProQual Awarding Body	500
Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education	500
Graded Qualifications Alliance	450
British Safety Council	400
Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd	400
ifs University College (previously known as ifs School of Finance)	400
Safety Training Awards	350
FDQ Limited	350
Training Qualifications UK Ltd	300
Equestrian Qualifications Limited	250
1st4sport Qualifications	250
McDonalds	250
Central YMCA Qualifications	250
Signature	200
Chartered Management Institute	200

Source: Regulated Qualifications Activity Database

Notes:

1. Vocational and other qualifications represent all regulated qualifications other than GCSEs, GCEs and the Diploma.
2. Data are supplied by awarding organisations.

Rounding: All figures are rounded to the nearest 50, values less than 25 will appear as zero~. Zero represent no achievements.

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