

Entry Level qualifications: removing unnecessary regulations

Equality impact assessment



From August to October 2016, we consulted on proposals to withdraw a set of our regulations which apply only to Entry Level qualifications – the “Criteria for Entry Level qualifications”. This is our final equality impact assessment based on our proposals, consultation responses and final decisions.

We considered the likely impacts of our proposals to withdraw the regulations including the impacts on learners with certain protected characteristics. We looked at the National Pupil Database¹ to determine whether Entry Level qualifications were likely to be taken by a disproportionately large numbers of learners with particular protected characteristics. We estimated that for Entry Level qualifications in GCSE subjects between 60% and 90% of the cohort would have a recognised special educational need, with some of these students being disabled².

We have taken the view, therefore, that any changes to Entry Level qualifications would have a potential impact on disabled students. However, we judge that the changes proposed in removing an expectation of 40% or 50% external assessment could allow regulated Awarding Organisations to develop qualifications that better met the needs of Entry Level qualification students, including those who are disabled, and so where there is an impact it will be positive. 10 of the 11 respondents to our consultation agreed (with 6 strongly agreeing) with our view that the proposals did not create any adverse effect on students with particular protected characteristics. Two of these respondents commented that the removal of the regulations was likely to lead to positive impacts for some students with particular protected characteristics. One respondent neither agreed or disagreed with our view that we had not created any adverse effects.

Overall, following our own assessment and considering the consultation responses, we judge that the removal of the Criteria for Entry Level qualifications will have either a neutral or positive effect on disabled students.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-pupil-database>

² It is possible that Entry Level qualifications in non GCSE subjects have a different cohort balance with differing proportions of special educational need. However, given the proposal, we consider this a reasonable reference point.

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