

## **Introduction of the Regulated Qualifications Framework and Total Qualification Time criteria**

**Department for Education - Ofqual**

**RPC rating: validated**

### **Description of proposal**

In October 2015 the suite of regulations that prescribed the characteristics of the majority of qualifications, known as the *Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit* (the QFC rules), was replaced with a new *Regulated Qualifications Framework* (RQF).

The main changes introduced in the RQF included the following.

- Unit bank closure – the unit bank was a repository of units developed by awarding organisations (AO) that could be shared with some or all AOs. Units in the unit bank were used by AOs to construct their qualifications. Having consulted on the issue, Ofqual decided that the unit bank led to a “one size fits all” approach to qualification design that did not always lead to development of high quality qualifications.
- Introduction of a Total Qualification Time (TQT) requirement – under the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children & Learning Act 2009 Ofqual is obliged to specify the number of Guided Learning (GL) Hours (reflecting teaching time) required to obtain a qualification. Because GL Hours do not include the independent study and assessment time required for many qualifications, the Regulator proposed the introduction of TQT.

### **Impacts of proposal**

The IA states that 157 Awarding Organisations are affected by the change.

Ofqual estimates that 32 AOs are affected by the unit bank closure and estimates the total cost of this change at £359,000. Based on administrative data and the experience of its staff in writing such materials, Ofqual estimates that 1,727 units need to be replaced as a result of the closure and each replacement will take 8 hours. Based on information from AOs, the annual wage rate (appropriately uplifted) of the staff employed to write units was estimated at £26 per hour.

The introduction of Total Qualification Time requires AOs to review their current information and confirm GL and TQT values with education or training centres. In line with the advice of an internal expert, Ofqual assumes that this takes 30 minutes per qualification. With 17,500 qualifications to be updated, the total cost of this change was estimated at £228,000.

Awarding organisations are also required to submit TQT values to Ofqual and make minor changes to the existing course descriptions. The regulator assumes, on the basis of internal expertise, that it takes around 30 minutes to update each record in this way. Using an uplifted hourly wage rate for administrative staff of £15 per hour, the IA estimates that it cost £131,000.

5 new guidance documents were published to help organisations adapt to the new system. Based on standard assumptions about reading speeds and the wage rates above, Ofqual estimates a total one-off familiarisation cost of £43,000.

The RPC verifies the estimated equivalent annual net direct cost to business (EANDCB) of £0.1 million. This will be a qualifying regulatory provision that will score under the Business Impact Target.

## Quality of submission

The assessment is concise and proportionate. It makes appropriate reference to an earlier qualitative Regulatory Impact Assessment carried out by Ofqual at the time of the change.

## Issues addressed following RPC's initial review

The initial review notice pointed out that the original assessment failed to consider costs related to calculating TQT values and updating qualification records and did not adequately justify some of its assumptions. The regulator has now addressed these issues by including a detailed analysis of the aforementioned costs. It has also provided a more detailed description of the sources underpinning the assumptions. The RPC is now able to validate the EANDCB.

## Departmental assessment

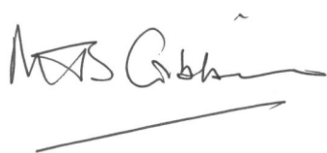
Classification	Qualifying regulatory provision (IN)
Equivalent annual net direct cost to business (EANDCB)	£0.1 million

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Business net present value	£-0.75 million
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### RPC assessment

Classification	Qualifying regulatory provision (IN)
EANDCB – RPC validated <sup>1</sup>	£0.1 million
Business Impact Target (BIT) Score <sup>1</sup>	£0.5 million



**Michael Gibbons CBE**, Chairman

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<sup>1</sup> For reporting purposes, the RPC validates EANCB and BIT score figures to the nearest £100,000.