



Department
for Education

16-18 Performance Tables Qualifications: amendments for 2027

Guidance

November 2024

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Summary

This publication provides non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education. It has been produced to help awarding organisations to amend and update 16-18 qualifications which currently count for the 2026 performance tables, prior to inclusion on the list of qualifications counting for 2027 performance tables.

Expiry date

This guidance expires on 30 April 2025

Who is this publication for?

This guidance is for:

- Awarding organisations

Background

A moratorium has been in place since the 2020 performance table lists were published in 2018, which means that no new vocational or technical qualifications can be added to the list of 16-18 qualifications which count towards performance tables.

We are beginning the process of continuing qualifications currently counting towards 2026 performance tables (2026 list) to be on the list of qualifications that will count towards 2027 performance tables (2027 list).

Before we publish the 2027 list, we are opening our annual process for you to submit proposed amendments to your 16-18 Technical Certificates, Tech Levels and Applied General qualifications already on the 2026 list, for example where this is necessary to update content to reflect legislative change.

The deadline for receipt of submissions is 31 January 2025 at 5:00pm. We would welcome early submission of qualification amendments.

Review of post-16 Qualifications Reforms

This amendment process does not anticipate the outcome of the current review of post-16 reforms. Any qualification that is confirmed to have 16-19 funding approval withdrawn from 1 August 2025 through the review of post-16 reforms will not be eligible to have funded new starts in 2025 to 2026 count towards performance tables in 2027.

In this scenario only the small cohort of funded enrolments by students who started the qualification concerned in 2024 to 2025 and take over 2 years to complete will be eligible to count towards performance tables in 2027.

Guidance

This guidance details the process by which any proposed amendments can be submitted by awarding organisation and how these will be reviewed by the department.

The awarding organisation must clearly identify:

- the qualifications they are amending
- the specific changes they propose
- how the qualifications remain compliant with the characteristics in the 2020 Technical Guidance.

The department will review all proposed amendments and decide whether the changes are within scope (see below) and if the qualification(s) continues to demonstrate all the characteristics of a performance table qualification.

All proposed changes to qualifications should be submitted via e-mail to Technical.EDUCATION@education.gov.uk by 5:00pm on 31 January 2025.

Please ensure that your email subject title is: **16-18 2027 PTQ amendments: [insert qualification number and title]**.

Please submit the amendments for each qualification or each suite of related qualifications on a separate email. Where you are amending a suite of qualifications, please can you indicate which amendments are common throughout each qualification in the suite.

To note: we recently wrote to all awarding organisations asking you to confirm if your qualifications on the 2026 PTQ list still met the characteristics to count towards performance tables in 2027. We asked you to indicate if your qualification:

- a) **no longer meets** the criteria to count towards performance tables and should be **removed from the 16-18 2027 PTQ list**.
- b) **continues to meet** the criteria to count towards performance tables and should be **remain on the 16-18 2027 PTQ list** and does **not require amending or** updating for the 2027 list.
- c) continues to meet the criteria to count towards performance tables and should be **remain on the 16-18 2027 PTQ list** but will **require amending or updating** for the 2027 list.
- d) has been withdrawn from operation before 31 July 2024.
- e) will be withdrawn from operation by 31 July 2025.

We only expect qualifications for which you chose **option c)** to be in scope of this process.

If you chose **option b)** but now need to amend your qualification you can also follow this process but should clarify your reasons in the email to us.

Please ensure that your email subject title is: **16-18 2027 PTQ amendments change to Check-in status: [insert awarding organisation name]**.

If you chose one of the other options, your qualifications will either:

- be withdrawn from the list of qualifications counting towards performance tables in 2027.
- remain on the list of qualifications counting towards performance tables in 2027 to count for small number, if any, funded enrolments by students who started the qualification concerned in 2024 to 2025 and take over 2 years to complete.

The department intends to inform awarding organisations of the initial outcomes of the review process by February 2025. Note that this date is dependent on the overall number of qualifications submitted by awarding organisations for review.

If the initial outcome is not to approve the amendments, details of the appeal process will be communicated to awarding organisations in the initial outcome letters. The department intends to inform awarding organisations of the outcomes of the appeal process in late spring 2025. Note that this date is dependent on the overall number of qualifications submitted by awarding organisations for review and appeal.

Amendments and qualifications in scope

Any proposed amendments to a qualification should not be so extensive that it starts to become a new or substantially different qualification. Amendments considered to be too extensive or not compliant with the [2020 Technical Guidance](#) criteria will not normally be accepted, in which case the original qualification will remain on the department's performance tables list.

Please note: If your amended qualification does not have the same qualification number (QAN) on the Ofqual Register as the current qualification it is considered a new qualification and so cannot be included on the 2027 PTQ List.

The baseline for qualifications to be included in 2027 performance tables is that they:

- are on the List of Qualifications approved for funding, showing as approved for 16-19 funding (without being restricted to 18+ only) in 2025 to 2026.
- were originally approved for inclusion in 2020 performance tables, and were subsequently extended into 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 PTQ lists.
- only contain amendments to those qualifications that were approved by the department as part of the annual amendments processes run since September 2018.
- do not contain any Covid-19 related adaptations.

Examples of amendments that will be considered are listed below. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, other reasonable proposed changes will be considered.

- **Update to content** – amendments incorporating changes in legislation, changes in trade standards/specifications, reacting to feedback from centres about the content.

- **New content** – the introduction of new units totalling not more than 20% of the number of units in the qualification, the guided learning hours of the new units do not total more than 20% of the qualification’s guided learning hours.
- **Changes of assessment methodology** – amendments to bring assessment in line with that of other qualifications in a suite, increasing the percentage of external assessment beyond the minimum level set out in technical guidance, replacing some multiple-choice questions within an assessment with longer-response questions.
- **Name change** – changes to one or two words within the name, reacting to feedback from centres about the name of the qualification.
- **Technological advances** – such as introduction of online assessment or remote invigilation options, with necessary controls and conditions set out.

Please note: Decisions about amendments are within the department’s discretion. Where a proposed amendment reflects one of the above listed examples, that will not guarantee that the amendment will be allowed. Each qualification will be reviewed to ensure that the proposed amendments are within scope and that the amended qualification still demonstrates the characteristics of a performance tables qualification, as set out in the 2020 Technical Guidance and in this guidance.

Evidence

For the department to assess the changes fully, please submit the following documentation, with all amendments clearly identified and highlighted through the use of ‘tracked changes’.

- **Rationale for the proposed changes** – in particular the rationale for any amendments to the assessment scheme should be very clear.
- **Specification** - showing the amendments in ‘tracked changes’.

Documentation that does not show the amendments in the format required will not be considered and the amendments will not be approved.

If your proposed changes necessitate any amendments to the **purpose statement**, **sample assessment materials** or **recognition letters**, please also submit those amended documents along with the rationale for the proposed changes and ‘tracked changes’ specification.

For clarification, the department does not provide advice and guidance on the development of assessments or amendments to any parts of an approved qualification. The department will only provide advice on, and clarification of, the required characteristics contained within the 2020 Technical Guidance, and advice on the process for awarding organisations to follow when proposing changes to approved qualifications.

Withdrawing qualifications from the 2027 list

We recently wrote to all awarding organisations asking you to confirm which of your qualifications on the 2026 PTQ list no longer met the criteria to count towards performance tables or which qualifications you were withdrawing and should be removed from the 16-18 2027 PTQ list.

You do not need to inform us where this is still the case.

However, if you now intend to withdraw a qualification you indicated would continue, and do not wish it to count towards performance tables in 2027, please send the details (Qualification Number and Title) to Technical.EDUCATION@education.gov.uk, so that the department can remove it when updating our list for publication. Please ensure that your email subject title is: **16-18 2027 PTQ amendments withdrawals: [insert awarding organisation name]**.

Technical Occupational and Alternative Academic qualifications

Information regarding new level 2 and level 3 Technical Occupational Qualifications, level 3 Alternative Academic Qualifications and performance tables will be available in due course.

2027 Key Stage 4 (KS4) Qualifications

Please note the KS4 process is separate from the one described in this 16-18 guidance and is administered by a different team. KS4 colleagues will write to awarding organisations in due course regarding 2027 performance tables for KS4 qualifications.

Contact

Any enquiries about the submission process should be sent to:

Technical.EDUCATION@education.gov.uk. Please ensure that your email subject title is: **16-18 2027 PTQ amendments enquiry [insert awarding organisation name]**.

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