

Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
20 Great Smith Street
London, SW1P 3BT

27th February 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

We are writing to you as leaders of schools and colleges in England that deliver applied general qualifications (AGQs). We are deeply concerned by your Department's plan to scrap many of these valuable qualifications. For a significant number of our students, applied general qualifications will continue to provide a more effective route to higher education or skilled employment than A levels or T levels.

We understand that you are not planning to introduce a binary system of A levels and T levels, but it is now clear that a significant proportion of AGQs will be removed following your review of Level 3 qualifications.

Your Department's guide to the qualification approval process published on 10th January 2023 indicates that more than half of the 134 AGQs that are currently available to young people will not be funded from 2025, as ministers have deemed qualifications in these subjects to be ineligible for approval. It is likely that many of the AGQs that are eligible for approval will not successfully navigate the process.

Removing such a significant proportion of applied general qualifications will have a hugely negative impact on many of our students. These qualifications provide a well-established and well-respected pathway to higher education or skilled employment. Scrapping most AGQs will remove the ladder of opportunity for a significant number of our students and lead some young people to disengage from education altogether.

We urge you to implement the two practical proposals that have been made by the Protect Student Choice campaign.

The first is to remove the 134 applied general qualifications from the scope of your Department's review. These qualifications have only recently undergone a rigorous process of reform and should not have to undergo a further process of approval. AGQs are highly respected by universities and employers and removing them would be disastrous for social mobility and economic growth.

The second is to delay the first teaching of approved qualifications by at least 12 months. The current plan to publish a list of approved qualifications on 31st July 2024 for schools and colleges to deliver from September 2025 is simply not credible.

We finalise our 16-19 course offer each July ready for the following academic year, so the offer for September 2025 will be developed between March and June 2024. During this period, prospectuses will be completed, marketing materials approved and websites updated. More importantly, our engagement work with Year 10 pupils will also be well underway. It will be very difficult to provide effective information,

advice and guidance to young people if we do not know what qualifications we can deliver until the end of July 2024.

Under the current plan, we will not have sufficient time to ensure that students are on the right courses, or the right staff are in place with the right level of training. At the moment, we have staff teaching AGQs that may be scrapped from 2025 and little information about what, if any, qualifications will replace them. This makes it very difficult to develop a coherent workforce plan.

We urge you to introduce approved qualifications from September 2026, rather than September 2025. This would remove a huge amount of uncertainty and concern. It would also help us to ensure that students are recruited onto the right courses, provide sufficient time to train and recruit staff, and provide younger pupils with a clear line of sight to the qualifications that will be available to them in the future.

We have grave concerns about your Department's plan to scrap most applied general qualifications and hope that you will remove them from the scope of your Department's review. But if you decide to proceed as planned, it is essential that the proposed date for the first teaching of approved qualifications is moved to September 2026, particularly as students will have a far narrower range of options to choose from.

A change of policy would ensure that many of our students are not left without a viable pathway to higher education or skilled employment at the age of 16. A change of timing would minimise the disruption to young people's education caused by implementing this policy. We hope that you will seriously consider these recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

Name	Title	Institution
A. B. Knowles	Principal	Xaverian College
Adele Christofi	Headteacher	Broomfield School
Alan Harrison	Executive Principal	Brantwood Specialist School
Alec Jiggins	CEO/Headteacher	International Community School (ICS) London
Alex Pett	Principal	Logic Studio School
Alex Scott	Principal and CEO	Itchen College
Alf Wood	Headteacher	Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School
Ali Bellaby	Headteacher	The Keystone Academy
Alison Rigby	Headteacher	St John Fisher Catholic High School
Altaf Hussain	Principal and CEO	Luton Sixth Form College
Amanda Bridgewater	Principal	Fairfield High School
Amanda Down	Principal Sixth Form	The Windsor Forest College Group
Amanda Rowley	Headteacher	The Wavell School
Ana Gibson	Headteacher	The Whitstable School
Andrew Bridson	Headteacher	Cardinal Langley RC High School
Andrew King	Headteacher	Cove School
Andrew Parkin	Principal	St Dominic's Sixth Form College
Andrew Russell	Headmaster	St David's College
Andrew Shakos	Interim Executive Headteacher	Abraham Moss Community School

Andy Grant	Principal	St Vincent College
Andy McGlown	Headteacher	St. Peter's Catholic High School
Andy Smith	Headteacher	Saint Aidan's Church of England High School
Angela Williams	Interim Co-Principal	Carmel College
Ann Webster	Headteacher	Sharples School
Anna Feltham	Headteacher	Clapton Girls' Academy
Anna Wright	Headmistress	Sherrardswood School
Annmarie Whelan	Headteacher	Weatherhead High School
Anton McGrath	Chief Executive Officer	Stamford Park Trust
Asma Shaffi	Principal	Prior Pursglove and Stockton Sixth Form College
Ben Davis	Headteacher	St. Ambrose Barlow RC High School
Ben Hillier	Head of College	Salisbury Sixth Form College
Brendon Fletcher	Principal	New College Doncaster
Brett Freeman	Principal	Woking College
Caireen Mitchell	Principal and CEO	Croydon College
Carey Ayres	Headteacher	The Joseph Whitaker School
Carina Vitti	Principal	Holy Cross College
Carla Prince	Headteacher	Central Foundation Girls' School
Carly Wilson	Headteacher	Belfield community school
Carol Grant	Headteacher	Brunel College, The WASP Centre
Carole Herman	Executive Director	Association of Secondary Heads in Essex
Carole Moss	Headteacher	Northstowe Secondary College
Caroline Sutton	Headteacher	Dormston School
Carolyn Yule	Executive Director	Middlesbrough College Sixth Form
Catharine Darnton	Headteacher	Gillotts School
Catherine Cole	Principal	The Sixth Form College Farnborough
Catherine Hughes	Headteacher	Loreto High School Chorlton
Catherine Richards	Principal	East Norfolk Sixth Form College
Charles Bartholomew	Principal	LIPA Sixth Form College
Charlie Kennard	Principal	London Screen Academy
Chris Coleman	Trust Director	Conyers School
Chris Hildrew	Headteacher	Churchill Academy & Sixth Form
Chris Holmwood	Headteacher	Shenley Brook End School
Chris Smith	Headteacher	South Bromsgrove High Academy Trust
Chris Tomlinson	CEO	Co-op Academies Trust
Chris Tooley	Principal	Netherhall School and Oakes College
Chris Vaudin	Headteacher	Frogmore Community College
Chrissie Millwood	Headteacher	Holy Trinity CofE Secondary School
Christopher Atherton	Principal	Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College
Clair Ellerby	Headteacher	The North School
Claire Boliver	Principal and CEO	South Staffordshire College
Claire Goodchild	Headteacher	Chelmer Valley High School
Clare Darby	Principal	Rawlins Academy
Clare De Sausmarez	Executive Headteacher	Alderwood School

Clare Russell	Principal and CEO	Runshaw College
Colin Peaks	Principal	Wilberforce Sixth Form College
Craig Hodgson	Principal and Chief Executive	Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group (NSCG)
Dale Hardy	Headmaster	Sir Robert Pattinson Academy
Damian Owen	CEO	Greater Manchester Education Trust
Dan Hards	Principal	Esher Sixth Form College
Dan Lodge	Principal	The College of Richard Collyer
Daniel Leonard	Headteacher	West Hatch High School
Daniel Machin	Principal	Queen Ethelburga's College
Danny Pearson	Principal	Aquinas College
David Bailey	Principal	Biddenham International School and Sports College
David Gartland	Principal	Abbeygate Sixth Form College
David Hayes	Headteacher	St Francis Xavier's College
David Naisbitt	CEO	Inspire Trust
David Preston	Headteacher	Arnold Lodge School
David Prophet	Headteacher	CHS South
David Shaw	Principal	Bilborough College
David Thornton	Interim Headteacher	St Aidan's Church of England High School
David Vasse	Principal	Sir George Monoux College
Davina Aspinall	Headteacher	Maghull High School
De Kathryn Hobbs	Headteacher	Davis Nieper Academy
Dee Elliott	Headteacher	Nailsea School
Desi McKeown	Headteacher	The Deanes
Donna-Marie Janson	Principal and CEO	Varndean College
Doreen Cronin	Principal	St Richard's Catholic College
Duncan Roberts	Principal	Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport
Ed Hillyard	Headteacher	Holmer Green Senior School
Ed Senior	Principal	Worcester Sixth Form College
Edward Conway	Headteacher	St Michael's Catholic High School
Edwin Towill	Headteacher	Denefield School
Elizabeth Robinson	Headteacher	Biddulph High School
Ellen Beveridge	Headteacher	Durham Sixth Form Centre
Emily Reynard	Principal	MEA Central
Emma Fielding	Principal	Richard Huish College
Emma Leaman	Headteacher	Colmers School and Sixth Form College
Emma Loveland	Headteacher	St. Anne's Catholic High School for Girls
Emma Soper	Principal	Connell Co-op College
Emma Wilson-Downes	Headteacher	Felixstowe School
Emma Young	Principal	Godalming College
Erika Podmore	Headteacher	Eltham Hill School
Esther Pearlman	Headteacher	Menorah High School for Girls
Felicity Corcoran	Principal	St Michael's Catholic College
Fergal Moane	Headteacher	Hitchin Boys' School

Gareth Lloyd	Principal	Stoke College
Gary Moore	Headteacher	Regent High School
Gary Mullings	Headteacher	Vyners School
Gary Pearson	Principal	Lydiard Park Academy
Geoff Osborne	Principal	Shooters Hill Sixth Form College
Geraint Edwards	Headteacher	The Priory School
Gill Burbridge	Principal	Leyton Sixth Form College
Gill Sarginson	Headteacher	Hopwood C P School
Glenn Prebble	Headteacher	Meopham Secondary School
Graeme Atkins	Executive Headteacher	Hadrian Learning Trust
Graham Pennington	Principal and Chief Executive	Sandwell College
Graham Tate	Headteacher	Highfields School
Graham Thompson	Principal	Saint Francis Xavier Sixth Form College
Grove Du Toit	Headmaster	Princethorpe College
Guy Rimmer	Principal	Ark St Alban's Academy
Helen Seddon	Headteacher	Our Lady's Catholic College
Holly Bembridge	Principal	King Edward VI College
Ian MacNaughton	Principal	The Sixth Form College, Colchester
Ian Tucker	Executive Principal	St John's Marlborough
Irfan H Latif	Principal	DLD College London
Jacqueline Fahey	Headteacher	Whalley Range 11-18 High School
James Bagley	Principal	Gateway Sixth Form College
James Davidson	Headteacher	Penair School
James Gresty	Principal	Priestley College
James Scott	Principal / CEO	The Trafford College Group
James Staniforth	Principal and CEO	Shrewsbury Colleges Group
Jamie Davies	Executive Principal	Longley Park Sixth Form Academy
Jamie Tickle	Headteacher	Abbot Beyne School
Jane Goodwin	Chief Executive Officer	Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust
Janet Smith	Principal	New City College - Havering Campuses
Janet Smith	CEO/Principal	Nottingham College
Jason Carey	Headteacher	Southend High School for Girls
Jayne Clarke	Executive Principal	The Pinnacle Learning Trust
Jeff Shaw	Headmaster	Scarisbrick Hall School
Jemima Reilly	Headteacher	Morpeth School
Jessica Leonard	Principal	Walton Academy
Jessica Stevenson	Principal	UTC Olympic Legacy Park
Jill Gray	Principal	The Blackpool Sixth Form College
Jo Trump	Principal	Hills Road Sixth Form College
Jo Tunnicliffe	Headteacher	North Kesteven Academy
Jo Turner	Principal	Branston Community Academy
Joanna Bailey	CEO	Tees Valley Collaborative Trust
Joanna Griffiths	Headteacher	Alder Grange School
Joe Poole	Head of Sixth Form	Hugh Baird College

Joel Wirth	Principal	Thomas Rotherham College
John Abbott	CEO	Richard Huish Trust
John Gilligan	Head of School	Hampton College
John Hallworth	Interim Executive Headteacher	Prosper Learning Trust
John Pitt	Headmaster	RGS Worcester
John Price	Headmaster	Worksop College
Jon Ryder	Headteacher	Lord Williams's School
Jonathan Andrew Grey	Principal	Callywith College
Jonathan Bland	Headteacher	The Stanway School
Jonathan C. Hetherington	Headmaster	More House School, Frensham
Jonathan Culpin	CEO	Anglian Learning
Jonathan Osborn	Headteacher	The King Edmund School
Julia Stevens	Principal	Cadbury Sixth Form College
Julian Metcalf	Head	Dartford Grammar School
Julian Nicholls	Headteacher	Trinity Church of England High School
Julie Owen	Headteacher	The Canterbury Centre
Julie Robinson	Principal	Soar Valley College
Justine Barlow	Principal	Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College
K Green	Principal	Dixons Brooklands Academy
Kal G Hodgson	Principal	Cedar Mount Academy
Kam Grewal Joy	Headteacher	Meadowhead School Academy Trust
Karen Buchanan	Principal	Burnley College
Karen Hayward	Executive Principal	Sandy secondary school
Karen Hucker	Principal	Bexhill College
Karen Key	Interim Headteacher	Knutsford Academy
Karen Slater	Headteacher	Hall Green School
Karl Newell	Headteacher	Crompton House School
Karl Smith	Principal	Rochdale Sixth Form College
Kate Pereira	Headteacher	St John Fisher School
Katie Marshall	Secondary Headteacher	Ark John Keats Academy
Kevin Watson	Principal	BSix Sixth Form College
Kim Gunn	Executive Headteacher	Valley Park School
Laranya Caslin	Principal	St George's Academy
Leanne Symonds	Headteacher	Ringwood School
Lee Downey	Head of School	The Holmesdale School
Lee Kirkwood	Principal	UTC Derby
Lee Ormsby	Headteacher	Our Lady's RC High School
Lee Styles	Principal	Elliott Hudson College
Leearna Thomas	Principal	St Thomas More Catholic Academy
Len Tildsley	Principal	Buxton & Leek College
Leon Riley	Principal and CEO	John Leggott College
Liam Collins	Principal	Ark Alexandra Academy
Lizzi Matthews	Headteacher	Broadwater School
Louise McGowan	Headmistress	St Claudine's Catholic School for Girls

Louise Tipping	Principal	Winstanley College
Louise Voden	Headteacher	Nower Hill High School
Lucy Heller	CEO	Ark
Lyndsey Brown	Headteacher	Oastlers School
Mandeep Gill	Principal and Chief Executive	Newham Sixth Form College
Marcus Smith-Connor	Principal	Huddersfield New College
Marian Curran	Principal	St Brendan's Sixth Form College
Mark Giles	Principal	The Hathershaw college
Mark Gilmore	Principal	Minsthorpe Community College
Mark Guest	CEO and Headteacher	Aspire Schools Trust/Sir William Robertson Academy
Mark Harris	Headteacher	Kirkbie Kendal School
Mark Kent	Principal	City of Stoke on Trent Sixth Form College
Mark Lewis	Chief Executive Officer	Hart Schools Trust
Mark Love	Principal	Oxford Sixth Form College
Mark McKelvie	Headteacher	Pudsey Grammar School
Mark Orrin	Head of School	The Trinity School, Colchester
Mark Woodlock	Headteacher	The Blue School, Wells
Mark Woods	CEO	Meridian Trust
Martin Davies	Head of School	Rayner Stephens High School
Martin Lavelle	Headteacher	Southgate School
Martin Sullivan	Principal	Solihull Sixth Form College
Martin Twist	Principal	St Charles Catholic Sixth Form College
Mary Berrisford	Principal	William Morris Sixth Form
Mathew Harper	Headteacher	Beauchamps High
Matt Jones OBE	Executive Principal	Ark Schools
Matt Pauling	Headteacher	Chosen Hill School
Matthew Brown	Headteacher	Blackfen school
Matthew Dean	Headteacher	Poynton High School
Michael Antram	Headteacher	St Edward's School
Michael Fitzsimons	Principal	Trinity Sixth Form Academy
Michael Gleeson	Executive Principal	Wootton Academy Trust
Michael Jaffrain	Principal	Loreto College
Michael McKenzie	Headteacher	Alexandra Park School
Michael Painter	Principal	BOA Stage and Screen Production Academy
Michael Sidebottom	Principal	Smithills School
Mike Yerosimou	Headteacher	Epping St John's
N Dimpleby	Headteacher	Altwood C of E School
Neil Gallagher	Executive Headteacher	Colne Community School
Neil Gallagher	Executive Headteacher	Clacton County High School
Nicholas Crew	CEO	The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust
Nicholas Norgrove	Headteacher	Abbeyfield School
Nick Burnham	Principal	Cardinal Newman College
Nick Clark	Principal	Reigate College

Nick Goodman	Principal	Frewen College
Nick Law	Executive Headteacher	Carre's Grammar School
Nick Smith	Headteacher	The Sittingbourne School
Nicki Hodges	Director of Post 16 and Executive Headteacher	Swale Academies Trust
Nicola Graham	Executive Principal	Harris Federation
Nicola Walker	Principal	Horbury Academy
Nigel Burgoyne	Executive Director	Suffolk Association of Secondary Headteachers
Pam Clulow	Headteacher	Cedars Short Stay School
Pat Carvalho	Principal	Birmingham Metropolitan College
Patrick Jordan	College Principal	Bede Sixth Form College
Patrick Russell	Headteacher	Ladybridge High School
Paul Britton	Principal / CEO	Wyke Sixth Form College
Paul German	Headteacher	Yateley School
Paul Jackson	Headteacher	The Thomas Aveling School
Paul Jenkins	Headteacher	Court Moor School
Paul Johnson	Headteacher	Churchill Community College
Paul Marsden	Headteacher	Saint Bede's Catholic High School, Lytham
Paul Stephen	Principal and Chief Executive	Newham College of Further Education
Paul Stirling	Headteacher	Archbishop Beck Catholic College
Paul Swindale	Principal	Richard Taunton 6th Form College
Paul Wilson	Principal and CEO	WQE and Regent College Group
Paul Wood	Principal and CEO	Westminster Academy
Peter Brooks	CEO	South Manchester Learning Trust
Peter Cooper	Principal	Hereford Sixth Form College
Peter Kennedy	Principal	Franklin Sixth Form College
Peter McGhee	Principal	St John Rigby College
Peter Mulholland	Principal	William Hulme's Grammar School
Peter Thomas	CEO	The Futures Trust
Phil Rumsey	Principal and CEO	Scarborough Sixth Form College
Philip Dore	Headteacher	St Wilfrid's Catholic High School & Sixth-Form College
Philip Stack	Headteacher	Oriel High School
Phill Quirk	Headteacher	Co-op Academy Failsworth
R Mitchell	Headteacher	Glebelands school
Rachael Hennigan	Principal	Hugh Baird College
Rachael Merritt	Principal	Minsthorpe Community College
Rea Margaret Mitchell	Headteacher	Robert May's School
Rebecca Parks	Group Principal	Salford City College
Renata Joseph	Headteacher	Saint Cecilia's School
Rich Peters	Headteacher	The Misbourne
Richard Booth	Headteacher	The Reach Free School
Richard Briggs	Headteacher	Baysgarth School
Richard Charles Ronsley	CEO	Altus Education Partnership
Richard Cross	Principal	Reddam House Berkshire

Richard Fletcher	CEO	New Collaborative Learning Trust
Richard Horsfield	Headteacher	Brighthouse High School
Richard Owen	Headteacher	The Maplesden Noakes School
Richard Paul	Headteacher	Greatfields School
Richard Williman	Headteacher	South Hunsley School and Sixth Form College
Rob Temple	Principal	Barton Peveril College
Robert Martlew	CEO	Synergy Multi Academy Trust
Robin M. Bevan	Headteacher/CEO	Southend High School for Boys (Academy Trust)
Robin Newman	Principal	Haileybury Turnford
Rowena Mackie	Headteacher	Northgate High School and Sixth Form
Rupert Maule	Headteacher	Bridge Learning Campus
Russ Lawrance	Chief Executive	Haringey Sixth Form Education Trust
Russell Plester	Headteacher	Finham Park 2
S Yarrow	CEO and Executive Headteacher	The Green School Trust
Sacha Corcoran	Principal	Big Creative Academy
Saira Luffman	Principal	BBG Academy
Samantha Vickers	CEO	Batley Multi Academy Trust
Sandra Paley	Executive Headteacher	Nova Trust
Sara Russell	Principal and CEO	Peter Symonds College, Winchester
Sarah Cox	Headteacher	The Appleton School
Sarah Diggory	Headteacher	Norton Canes High School
Sarah Edwards	Headteacher	The Weald School
Sarah Palmer	Headteacher	Fernhill School
Satwant Deol	Principal and CEO	The Henley College
Scott Holder	Executive Headteacher	The Philip Morant School & College
Scott Hudson	Chief Executive	Thomas Deacon Education Trust
Scott McKeown	Head of College	New Bridge College and Future Finders Employability College
Scott Ratheram	Executive Principal	The Education Alliance
Sean Maher	Headteacher	Richard Challoner School
Sharan Matharu	Headteacher	Elizabeth Woodville School
Shireen Razey	Executive Principal	Christ The King Sixth Form College
Simon Eccles	Headteacher	St Mary's Catholic Academy
Simon Gibbs	Head of School	New Rickstones Academy
Simon Godden	CEO	Trinitas Academy Trust
Simon Lett	Principal	Greenhead College
Simon Liley	Headteacher	The Angmering School
Simon Ramsay	Headteacher	Oaklands School
Simon Riding	Headteacher	Matravers School
Simon Warburton	Principal	Ely College
Simon Ward	Headteacher	Kingsway Park High School
Sonia Taylor	Headteacher	The Grove School
Stephanie Roberts	Executive Headteacher	Orbis Education Trust
Stephen Cattell	Principal	Trinity School, Belvedere

Stephen Gray	Headteacher	Calday Grange Grammar School
Steve Margetts	Principal	Torquay Academy
Steve Powell	Headteacher	Nunnery Wood High School
Steven Gallears	Headteacher	Northfleet Technology College
Steven Hogan	Headteacher	Woodbridge High School
Stuart Barlow	Principal	Coulsdon Sixth Form College
Stuart Laverick	CEO/Principal	Heart of Worcestershire College
Stuart Merrills	Principal	Bolton Sixth Form College
Stuart Noss	Principal	King Edward VI College (Nuneaton)
Stuart Worden	Principal	The BRIT School
Susan Hammond	Headteacher	Whitmore High School
Suzannah Reeves	Principal	Oldham Sixth Form College
Tania Lewyckyj	CEO	The Bishop Fraser Trust
Tanya Kelvie	Headteacher	Aylesford School
Tanya Moran	Principal	Abingdon House School
Thomas Carter	Headteacher	King Edward VI Grammar School
Tim Carroll	Headteacher	Vandyke Upper School
Tim Fisher	Principal	Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College
Tim Gilson	CEO	The Athelstan Trust
Tom Hill	Headteacher Designate	Lyde Green Community School
Toni Whiteman	Head of School	The Hazeley Academy
Tony Day	Principal and CEO	Joseph Chamberlain College
Tony McCabe	Headteacher	St Joseph's RC High School
Tony Nelson	CEO	5 Dimensions Trust
Tony Roe	Headteacher	Barking Abbey School
Tracy Aust	CEO and Principal	West Thames College
Tracy Hatton	Headteacher	Maricourt Catholic High School and Sixth Form Centre
Uly Lyons	CEO	Better Futures Multi Academy Trust
Vicky Marks	Principal	New College Pontefract
Victoria Hearn	Principal	Impington Village College
Victoria Smit	Principal	Hurst Lodge school
Vince Green	CEO	Summit Learning Trust
Vivienne Qurrey	Headteacher	Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School
William Baldwin	Principal	Brighton, Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College
Yiannis Koursis OBE	CEO	Barnsley College
Yolanda Botham	Principal	Long Road Sixth Form College
Zoe Lewis	Principal / CEO	Middlesbrough College

cc.

Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Minister of State (Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education)

Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State (Minister of State for Schools)

Baroness Barran MBE, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for the School System and Student Finance)