



The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education

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Protect Student Choice Campaign
By email: info@protectstudentchoice.org

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Dear Protect Student Choice,

Thank you for your letter of 25 July 2024 regarding the pause and review of post-16 qualifications reforms.

As your letter sets out, you would wish for a pause in defunding of applied general qualifications which are due to have funding removed in September 2025 and 2026.

As you are aware on 24 July I announced the short, focused review into post-16 qualifications reform at level 3 and below, alongside the re-contracting of T Level qualifications to ensure these high-quality qualifications continue to be available to learners. To allow space for a short review of the current planned reforms, we will place a pause on the planned removal, on 31 July 2024, of 16 to 19 funding from qualifications in Construction and the Built Environment, Digital, Education and Early Years, and Health and Science. This will mean that, subject to any commercial decisions made by awarding organisations on these qualifications, they can be funded for 16- to 19-year-old new students in the 2024/25 academic year.


We will conclude and communicate the outcomes of this review before the turn of the year, in order to provide schools and colleges clarity on their provision for the academic year 25/26. We do not want to prejudge the findings of this short review by pausing defunding in the longer term for now. Therefore, defunding decisions for September 2025 onwards will be confirmed at the conclusion of the focused review, and the Curriculum and Assessment Review will reflect these decisions.

When communicating with prospective students, colleges should be clear if a qualification they are interested in offering may not be available because it is currently on a defunding list. However, the position will be clarified before the turn of the year and colleges will be able to reflect this in their planning and marketing materials in the new year. In addition, a student enrolled on a course before the defunding date will be funded for the full length of the qualification.

In May 2024 new level 3 technical and non-technical qualifications were approved for funding in England from 1 August 2025, and this will remain in place. We will also publish, as soon as possible, a list of reformed level 2 qualifications in Construction and the Built Environment, Education and Early Years, Engineering and Manufacturing and Health and Science that will be funded from August 2025. These qualifications, alongside those already announced at level 3, will provide the next step to ensuring we deliver the skilled training needed to support key areas of our economy, providers can look to these as part of their future offer.

We will engage and collaborate with stakeholders as part of the focused post-16 qualifications reforms review. The work that sixth form colleges, training and apprenticeships providers and the FE sector do is essential to the change this government wants to achieve across the country. I therefore look forward to working with you to deliver this government's missions to break down barriers to opportunity and drive economic growth.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
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