



To:

Recognised awarding organisations
Sector Skills Councils and Standard Setting Bodies
Respondents to the QCF regulatory arrangements consultation
Organisations involved in the development of the QCF

28 August 2008

Dear Colleague

REGULATORY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE QUALIFICATIONS AND CREDIT FRAMEWORK

As you may well be aware, the qualifications regulators in England (Ofqual), Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA) have been working to establish an approach to regulation for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). We are pleased to announce the publication of *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*. We attach an electronic copy of the *arrangements* with this email and we will send you a hard copy of this document in the next month. We also use this letter to give some further details on how we will regulate the QCF.

The *regulatory arrangements* set out the requirements that will apply to the organisations that operate within, and the qualifications that are accredited into, the QCF. They set the standard that all organisations and qualifications must meet in order to be recognised as part of the framework. Their purpose is to set out appropriate, transparent and consistent arrangements for the regulation of units and qualifications in the QCF in order to safeguard the interests of learners and maintain standards and public confidence in the national qualifications system. The *regulatory arrangements* also establish regulations that reflect the requirements of a unit-based and credit-based qualifications system.

In developing an approach to regulation for the QCF, we have ensured that we build on established requirements and processes for regulating awarding organisations and their qualifications. The *regulatory arrangements* are also designed to reflect the qualifications regulators' policy commitment to a strategic, risk-based approach to safeguarding the interests of learners. To

this end, the *arrangements* are focused to a much greater extent than previously on the ability of the organisations that operate in the QCF to develop and assess units and qualifications, and award credits and qualifications, to the appropriate standards. As a result, they set out a reduction in the general level of the scrutiny of individual units and qualifications. That said, the qualifications regulators will still consider all aspects of individual units and qualifications wherever they feel the need arises. The *regulatory arrangements* provide the basis for our regulatory activity for the QCF.

The publication of the *regulatory arrangements* gives awarding organisations formal notification of the requirements they will have to meet. Awarding organisations and others will now be keen to learn of the processes we have put in place to build on these requirements to recognise organisations to operate in the QCF and accredit qualifications. We have today published full detail of this in *Implementation of Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*. We set out in that document how we will work with organisations that wish to operate in the QCF to ensure that the *regulatory arrangements* are implemented. The timescale by which individual organisations will apply the arrangements will vary with the decisions that they take about when they decide to engage with the QCF.

We are also publishing other information about our approach to regulation for the QCF. This comprises *Operating rules for using the term 'NVQ' in a QCF qualification title* which gives details of the requirements that must be met for qualifications that include 'NVQ' in the title. In addition, we are presenting a report summarising the outcomes from the consultation that we held on the regulatory arrangements *Summary Report on the Responses to the Consultation on the Proposed Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework*.

This information is all available on the qualification regulators' websites at www.ofqual.gov.uk/qcf, www.wales.gov.uk and www.ccea.org.uk/regulation.

The QCF is now moving from a period of testing and trialling to a period of controlled implementation. The tests and trials identified that many of the key processes of the QCF are yet to be fully tested and that most of the benefits are anticipated rather than realised. As a result, the qualifications regulators are clear that there is a need to closely monitor and evaluate the impact of the QCF *regulatory arrangements* in practice. This means both considering their suitability and how well associated regulatory activity and the operation of the QCF in general are working. We will report publicly on our findings after the first year the *regulatory arrangements* have been in operation.


The publication of the *Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework* marks a significant milestone in the development of the QCF. They provide the means to support the development of the QCF from a set of test and trial arrangements to full implementation. They set out a basis for doing this that supports the aims of the QCF to provide learners with a greater range of choice, opportunities and increased flexibility. They also

provide a secure foundation on which standards and comparability and public confidence in the QCF will be maintained. We look forward to working with you to ensure these goals are achieved.

Yours sincerely,



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Mike Clancy, Group Director Qualifications, Curriculum and Learning Improvement (Chief Regulator for Wales), DCELLS



Neil Anderson, Acting Chief Executive, CCEA