

News story: Consultation on approach to regulating Technical Qualifications

Ofqual has today (10 July 2018) launched [a consultation on our approach to regulating the new Technical Qualifications that will sit within T Levels](#). The Institute for Apprenticeships has overarching responsibility for the T Level programme and recently consulted on outline subject content for the first three pathways. Ofqual's consultation provides an opportunity for anyone with an interest in the new Technical Qualifications to shape our thinking on how we will frame our rules, including on issues such as how assessments should be set and marked, when assessments and retakes can be taken, and certification requirements. The consultation will run for 4 weeks, until 6 August.

Commenting on today's publication, Sally Collier, Chief Regulator, said:

It is important that the new Technical Qualifications play their part in delivering what employers need. To do this they need to be high quality, reliable, comparable, of the right level of demand and trusted. This consultation will help ensure that Technical Qualifications, and the T Levels of which they form a part, are set up to succeed. I would encourage anyone with an interest in these new qualifications to give us their views on the proposals we have set out.

We are consulting on our policy approach to regulating all parts of the Technical Qualifications and would welcome views in all aspects of this consultation. We recognise, however, that given the scale of our proposals, respondents may not wish to respond to the whole consultation. We would encourage individuals to respond to those areas that are of interest to them but we are particularly interested in views on:

- Setting and marking assessments (page 38)
- Results and certification (page 30)
- Retakes (page 24)

We also are holding three events in support of the consultation to give an opportunity for people to hear about our proposals, ask any questions and provide their views. These are:

- 23 July 2018, 10:30 to 3:30 – Park Plaza County Hall, London, SE1 7RY
- 24 July 2018, 11:30 to 16:30 – The Village, Coventry, CV4 9GZ
- 31 July 2018, 10:30 to 15:30 – Mercure Manchester Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester, M1 4PH

You can [book your place on our event page](#). Please note, depending on the level of interest, we may need to restrict attendance to a maximum of 2 representatives from each organisation.

Following this policy consultation we will analyse responses in collaboration with the Institute and consult on the wording of the rules we will apply to Technical Qualifications. We anticipate running an 8-week technical consultation, beginning in early September.

News story: Making better use of speech therapy: apply for funding

The [Department of Health](#) in Northern Ireland has up to £180,000 for technology projects that promote and support better use of speech and language therapy services for people who have suffered strokes.

Up to 3 early-stage projects will be funded under the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI), with the best ideas going on to compete for further funding to undertake clinical trials.

Aim to improve rehabilitation

Projects should aim to use technology to increase use of speech and language therapy services and make these more effective and efficient.

They should help therapy services improve rehabilitation of stroke patients experiencing a number of difficulties including:

- aphasia, an impairment of language skills
- apraxia, a difficulty with motor skills required for production of speech
- dysphagia, where patients have swallowing difficulties
- dysarthria, which is difficult or unclear articulation of speech

Phase 1 projects will be expected to develop and design prototypes and plan and design clinical trials. Ideas could include:

- tailored patient assessments
- ways of encouraging patient participation including through motivating interfaces and involvement of family and friends
- remote working
- personalised smart programs that adapt to patient progress
- real-time patient feedback to therapy teams

Solutions should be small, portable and conform to relevant standards for medical devices.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for tenders is at 3pm on 3 August 2018
 - the competition is open to any organisation that can demonstrate a route to market for its idea
 - we expect phase 1 contracts to be worth up to £60,000 and to last 6 months
 - successful projects will attract 100% funded development contracts
 - applications should be made through [eTendersNI](#)
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Press release: 'It's coming home' – be safe and marvel at England's two 'World Cup' motorways!

As fans' cheer on Harry Kane and co in their bid for World Cup semi-final glory, the country's busiest roads are set to fall somewhat more silent than they normally would be midweek at 7pm.

A brief analysis of traffic on each of the England match days to date, comparing an hour before kick-off to two hours after, showed that during the games demand reduced by up to 33%.

And the roads were not busier than normal immediately before, or after the games, suggesting people are often choosing not to travel or to travel at completely different times, rather than to change their journeys to earlier or later times in the same day.

Highway England, the government company responsible for motorways and major A roads, is urging anyone travelling home to watch the match, and anyone travelling while it is on, to stay safe.

Frank Bird, one of Highways England's emergency planning officers, said:

Along with the rest of the country, we'll be cheering on England! We want them to bring it home – and we want everyone on our roads to get home safely.

When England played Columbia we noticed traffic levels drop by about a third so we're anticipating similar on Wednesday.

If you're on the road – please drive safely and keep your focus on the journey. And then we look forward to doing it all again on Sunday!

England motorways and major A roads normally carry 4 million journeys a day.

And two of them could have a strange connection to the World Cup!

The M66 and M18 are exactly 52 miles apart – the same as the number of years since England last won the World Cup.

The M18 also opened the year after England's 1966 win and has seven junctions, which happens to be the number of matches England will have played if we reach the World Cup Final.

Meanwhile, make sure you don't miss tomorrow's kick-off by carrying out some simple vehicle checks to ensure your vehicle is fit for your journey and you get to your destination safely.

During the warm weather, make sure you have plenty of water on board, and while driving, look out for signs and signals, like Red Xs. These are shown above closed lanes – and may be protecting people who have stopped in a live lane, or keeping access open for emergency services going to their aid.

Highways England traffic officers will be working around the clock to help people who get into difficulty, but are urging motorists to:

- Check fuel: Make sure you have enough to get to your destination and don't have to go off-side for more unexpectedly.
- Check tyres: check your tyre pressure and the condition of your tyres, including the spare. Look out for cuts or wear and make sure the tyres have a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm, which is the legal limit.
- Check engine oil: Use your dipstick to check oil before any long journey, and top up if needed. Take your car back to the garage if you're topping up more than usual.
- Check water: To ensure you have good visibility, always keep your screen wash topped up so you can clear debris or dirt off your windscreen.
- Don't speed – there's no need to be a-Russian to your destination, so take it easy and don't Kane it.

For advice on how to drive on a smart motorway, [please visit our web page.](#)

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Corporate report: Board of Commissioners meeting, 14 December 2017, London

Meeting attendees

- Sir Harry Studholme (Chair)
- Mary Barkham
- Amanda Bryan
- Ian Gambles
- Julia Grant
- George McRobbie
- Jo O'Hara
- Jean Linday

Press release: Prime Minister pays tribute to Lord Carrington

The death of Peter Carrington at the age of 99 marks the end of an era and the loss of a statesman who was respected globally for his remarkable lifetime of public service.

There can be few people who have served our country for as long, and with such dedication, as Lord Carrington did – from his gallantry as a tank commander in the Second World War, for which he was awarded the Military Cross, to his service in Government under two Monarchs and six Prime Ministers, dating back to Winston Churchill.

He was a much loved and widely respected member of the House of Lords for nearly eight decades, and served with great honour and integrity in Government as Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary, Leader of the House of Lords, Chairman of the Conservative Party and much more besides. These were qualities that he also brought to bear as a highly esteemed Secretary General of NATO – and, in the week of the NATO Summit, I know that my fellow leaders will join me in offering our gratitude for his lifetime of service and our deepest condolences to his family.