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Guidance

Digital Functional Skills qualifications:

progress so far

Updated 27 April 2022

Applies to England

The Department for Education (the Department) is introducing new qualifications called Digital Functional Skills qualifications (FSQs) that seek to provide students with the core digital skills needed to fully participate in society. They are being introduced as part of [the Department's plans to improve adult basic digital skills](#) and the new qualifications will sit alongside [Essential Digital Skills qualifications \(EDSQs\)](#) as part of the government's adult digital offer.

Digital FSQs will be available for first teaching from August 2023 and will be new qualifications replacing the existing FSQs in Information Computer Technology (ICT).

The Department published the [final subject content for Digital FSQs](#) on 29 October 2021 following a [consultation in May 2019](#). Awarding organisations will use this subject content to develop the new qualifications.

Ofqual will regulate Digital FSQs and [the final version of the regulatory framework was published on 31 March 2022](#). This sets out the conditions, requirements and guidance against which the new Digital FSQs are regulated.

Any awarding organisation wishing to develop these new qualifications will first need to apply to expand its scope of recognition. The application window to do this opened on 14 April 2022. The aim is to inform an awarding organisation of the outcome of its application, or to request further evidence, within 8 weeks of receipt of an application. There is guidance on expanding the scope of recognition on a ["How-to" guide, accessed via The Portal](#).

Once an awarding organisation has extended its scope of recognition, it will then need to submit its Digital FSQs for technical evaluation by Ofqual. The submission window will be open from 5 September until 14 October 2022. There is also the opportunity for awarding organisations to gain early feedback from Ofqual on their proposed approach from July to August 2022.

An evaluation progress table will be published in the coming months, like for EDSQs, so that awarding organisation progress against technical evaluation gateways can be seen.

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