



Department  
for Education

# **Review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 in England**

**Equalities impact assessment of the  
provisional list of qualifications that  
overlap with T Levels waves 1 and 2**

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## Introduction

This equalities impact assessment (EIA) accompanies the [provisional list of wave 1 and 2 overlap qualifications](#) (overlap list). It provides an overview of potential impacts resulting from the proposed removal of public funding approval from these qualifications for 16 to 19 year olds.

Where students are identified as being disproportionately likely to be affected, this relates specifically to those who are more likely to be studying qualifications expected to have public funding approval removed for 16 to 19 year olds due to overlap with waves 1 and 2 T Levels.

For the overall impact of qualifications review at level 3, please refer to [impact assessment](#) that was published last summer along with our [policy statement](#) and [consultation response](#). The nature of these impacts are not repeated in this impact assessment though some headline data are included for comparison

## Public Sector Equality Duty

Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Secretary of State has a duty to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant 'protected characteristics' for the purposes of the Public Sector Equality Duty are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnicity)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

# Analysis of impacts

## **16 to 19 year olds**

A full breakdown of the characteristics of 16 to 19 year old enrolments at level 3, including those on qualifications which are on the provisional overlap list can be found in table 1 below.

Our assessment is broadly based on comparing the proportion of enrolments with protected characteristics on qualifications which are on the provisional overlap list to those qualifications available more broadly at level 3, excluding A Levels. Our assessment excludes A levels, as they are outside of the scope of this review, and because the size and characteristics of the A level cohort would skew the comparison.

For 16 to 19 year olds, the EIA published alongside the second stage consultation response highlighted that those from SEND backgrounds, Asian ethnic groups, disadvantaged backgrounds and males were likely to be particularly affected by the reforms. This is broadly similar to the impacts stemming from the wave 1 and 2 overlap list alone where our analysis shows that those from SEND backgrounds, disadvantaged backgrounds, and those from White ethnic groups are more likely to be disproportionately affected.

As shown in table 1 below, the following groups of people may be slightly more affected by this stage of the reform process (waves 1 and 2 overlap) compared to previous analysis on the overall impact of removing public funding from qualifications as outlined in the second stage consultation impact assessment:

- Female students
- White ethnic background
- SEND backgrounds, and
- Disadvantaged backgrounds

The students that are likely to study the qualifications on the provisional overlap list will benefit in the future because they will take high quality qualifications that meet the needs of employers, putting them in a strong position to progress onto further study or skilled employment. They will also have clearer choice at 16, with T Levels at the front and centre. The rigour of T Levels, combined with the meaningful industry placement of at least 45 days in a genuine workplace, will equip more young people with the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to access skilled employment or further technical study. We have also introduced the T Level Transition Programme to support young people who are not ready to start a T Level at age 16 but could progress to one following a tailored preparation programme.

	Level 3	Level 3 excl. A levels	Impact from removal of public funding from qualifications on waves 1 and 2 overlap list	Overall impact at level 3 from removal of public funding (from second stage consultation response impact assessment)
<b>16-19 enrolments</b>	1,946,000	662,000	66,000	287,000
<b>% Female</b>	53%	49%	49%	44%
<b>% Asian (inc. Chinese)</b>	13%	11%	12%	12%
<b>% Black</b>	6%	6%	5%	6%
<b>% Mixed</b>	5%	4%	3%	%
<b>% White</b>	68%	71%	73%	72
<b>% Other ethnic background</b>	2%	2%	1%	2%
<b>% Unknown ethnic background</b>	6%	6%	5%	5%
<b>% SEN Support at age 15 (special education needs)</b>	5%	9%	11%	9%
<b>% EHCP at age 15 (Education, health and care plan)</b>	1%	1%	2%	2%
<b>% FSM at age 15 (Free school meal)</b>	8%	11%	13%	11%
<b>% IDACI<sup>1</sup> 1 (most disadvantaged)</b>	18%	23%	27%	24%
<b>% IDACI 2</b>	19%	21%	23%	23%
<b>% IDACI 3</b>	20%	19%	19%	19%
<b>% IDACI 4</b>	21%	18%	16%	18%
<b>% IDACI 5 (least disadvantaged)</b>	23%	18%	15%	16%

**Table 1: 16 to 19 enrolment characteristics at level 3, 2019/20**

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<sup>1</sup> Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, part of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

## **Adults**

The removal of public funding from qualifications that overlap with T levels only applies to 16-19 enrolments. We have not therefore provided an assessment of the impact on adults, as qualifications on the overlap list that are currently approved for adults will continue to be funded for adults in 2024. These qualifications are still subject to our future quality and other criteria.

We recognise that some awarding organisations, and or providers, may no longer wish to offer some of these qualifications, given potential impacts on viability. However, notwithstanding our removal of funding from qualifications with low and no enrolments, we have seen that AOs can operate qualifications with very few, or even no, Education and Skills Funding Agency funded enrolments, sometimes for many years. As such, this risk may be relatively minimal.



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