

Education Committee

Appointment of Sir Ian Bauckham CBE as Chief Regulator of the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)

First Report of Session 2024–25

HC 429

Education Committee

The Education Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Education and its associated public bodies.

Current membership

[Helen Hayes](#) (Labour; Dulwich and West Norwood) (Chair)

[Jess Asato](#) (Labour; Lowestoft)

[Mrs Sureena Brackenridge](#) (Labour; Wolverhampton North East)

[Dr Caroline Johnson](#) (Conservative; Sleaford and North Hykeham)

[Amanda Martin](#) (Labour; Portsmouth North)

[Darren Paffey](#) (Labour; Southampton Itchen)

[Manuela Perteghella](#) (Liberal Democrat; Stratford-on-Avon)

[Mark Swards](#) (Labour; Leeds South West and Morley)

[Patrick Spencer](#) (Conservative; Central Suffolk and North Ipswich)

[Dr Marie Tidball](#) (Labour; Penistone and Stocksbridge)

[Caroline Voaden](#) (Liberal Democrat; South Devon)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

This Report, together with formal minutes relating to the report, was Ordered by the House of Commons, on 10 December 2024, to be printed. It was published on 13 December 2024 by authority of the House of Commons.
© Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2024.

This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament Licence, which is published at www.parliament.uk/copyright.

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/education-committee and in print by Order of the House.

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Education Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 2370; the Committee's email address is educom@parliament.uk. You can follow the Committee on X (formerly Twitter) using [@CommonsEd](https://twitter.com/CommonsEd).

Contents

1	Background to the hearing	1
	Ofqual	1
	Pre-appointment hearing	1
2	The recruitment process	3
3	The position of Chief Regulator	4
	Role and person specification	4
	The Government's preferred candidate: Sir Ian Bauckham CBE	6
	Conclusions	7
	The Committee's views on the suitability of the candidate	7
	Wider reflections on the role	7
	Further scrutiny of Ofqual	8
	Appendix 1: Posts which are subject to pre-appointment hearings before the Education Committee	9
	Appendix 2: Correspondence from the Secretary of State	10
	Appendix 3: Recruitment information provided by the Department	12
	Appendix 4: Candidate's CV	20
	Appendix 5: Candidate's Supporting Statement	24
	Appendix 6: Candidate Questionnaire	28
	Formal minutes	35
	Witness	37

1 Background to the hearing

Ofqual

1. The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) is a non-ministerial department, established in April 2010 under Part 7 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. It regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.
2. Ofqual's priorities for the period 2022–25 are set out in its Corporate Plan:¹
 - Quality and fairness for students and apprentices;
 - Clarity, effectiveness and efficiency in the qualifications market;
 - Shaping the future of assessment and qualifications; and
 - Developing Ofqual as an effective, expert regulator and inclusive employer.

Pre-appointment hearing

3. Pre-appointment scrutiny hearings by select committees for certain ministerial appointments were introduced in 2008. Select committee pre-appointment hearings provide opportunity for:
 - a. scrutiny of the quality of ministerial decision-making;
 - b. public reassurance, in addition to the processes of the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments, that those appointed to key public offices have been selected on merit; and
 - c. public evidence of the independence of mind of the Candidate; enhancing the appointee's legitimacy in undertaking his or her function, including providing the public with an insight into the Candidate's views on the policy issues related to the role.

¹ [Ofqual Corporate Plan 2022 to 25, 4 May 2022](#)

4. The Chief Regulator of Ofqual is one of four positions subject to a pre-appointment hearing by the Education Select Committee.² This is to help ensure that the candidate is suitable for the post.
5. On 11 November 2024, the Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP, wrote to us to say that Sir Ian Bauckham CBE, currently interim Chief Regulator of Ofqual, had been selected as the Government's preferred candidate to take up the post of the Chief Regulator of Ofqual. The Committee was invited to hold a pre-appointment hearing with the candidate.³ The Secretary of State's letter, the candidate's curriculum vitae and a memorandum provided by the Government, which sets out the requirements of the post, along with details of the recruitment process, are all appended to this Report.
6. As per Liaison Committee guidance, Select Committees are also encouraged to issue a written questionnaire to the Candidate, inviting the Candidate to disclose any conflicts of interest, to demonstrate their experience and expertise, their independence, and to indicate their initial priorities once in post.⁴ The Candidate's responses to this questionnaire are also appended to this Report.⁵
7. We accordingly invited Sir Ian to attend a pre-appointment hearing on Tuesday 10 December.

2 Appendix 1: Posts which are subject to pre-appointment hearings before the Education Committee

3 Appendix 2: Correspondence with the Secretary of State

4 [Liaison Committee, Pre-appointment Hearings, Third Report of Session 2017–19, HC 2307, 19 June 2019](#), paragraph 17

5 Appendix 4: Candidate Questionnaire

2 The recruitment process

8. The competition was launched in the public appointments sector of GOV.UK on 19 January 2024 for a period of over three weeks, closing on 12 February. A total of 12 applications were received when the competition closed. Two candidates were invited to interview as they were deemed to have met the bar.⁶
9. Interviews were conducted on 17 April. The recruitment panel was comprised of:
 - Juliet Chua CB–Director General, Schools Group (Departmental Official);
 - Frances Wadsworth CBE–Interim Chair, Ofqual (Representative of the Board);
 - Claire Wagner–Head of History at Moreton Hall School (Senior Independent Panel Member); and
 - Stuart McMinnies–Non-executive member on the DfE Board (Additional Panel Member).
10. Following interviews, the panel collectively agreed that Sir Ian Bauckham was suitable for the role and therefore deemed ‘appointable’, and Sir Ian was put forward as the Government’s preferred candidate by the Secretary of State for Education.
11. The appointment is based on a fixed term of five years after the interim term of Sir Ian ends.

6 Appendix 3: Recruitment information provided by the Department

3 The position of Chief Regulator

Role and person specification

- 12.** The Chief Regulator of Ofqual is an appointment made by the Secretary of State for a term of five years. The Chief Regulator is the Chief Executive, with responsibility for “delivering on Ofqual’s statutory duties, including to maintain standards and promote confidence in qualifications and assessments.”⁷
- 13.** According to the role profile, the main responsibilities of a Chief Regulator are to:⁸
- Lead Ofqual in acting as the independent regulator of qualifications and assessments in England;
 - Act as a public face of Ofqual, representing Ofqual to the public, ministers and Parliament;
 - Lead public debate in relation to the maintenance of both standards and confidence in examinations, qualifications and assessments;
 - Ensure that qualification reform programmes are delivered successfully, working closely with Government and awarding organisations. This will include the development and delivery of the new Advanced British Standard announced by the Prime Minister in October 2023;
 - Be responsible for the overall leadership, management, organisation and staffing of the organisation, building capacity and capability to deliver on major qualifications reforms alongside the effective delivery of the existing system;
 - Act as the HM Treasury-appointed Accounting Officer for Ofqual, accountable directly to Parliament for the use of Ofqual’s public assets, in line with the requirements set out in [Managing Public Money](#);

7 Job Description - [Appointment details – Chief Regulator, Ofqual – Apply for a public appointment – GOV.UK](#)

8 Appendix 3: Recruitment information provided by the Department

- Promote the values underpinning Ofqual, through personal leadership and example; and
- Coordinate and implement policies and actions determined by the Board.

14. The Candidates were assessed against six essential criteria during the recruitment process:⁹

- Proven track record of operating successfully in a senior leadership role, including the delivery of major projects - demonstrating the ability to play a key role in the leadership of the English education system and to provide strong and inspirational leadership to Ofqual and to the qualifications and wider education sector through a challenging period;
- A commitment to ensuring that qualifications and assessments are rigorous, valid and reliable;
- The ability to communicate effectively with, and command the respect and inspire the confidence of, Ministers, Parliament, awarding organisations and leaders in the education sector and of the Ofqual board and staff, as well as of students, parents and the general public; including the ability to represent Ofqual effectively in the media;
- The ability to navigate the political landscape skilfully, and a good understanding of the government's educational reform programme and the role of the regulator in implementing the reforms;
- Demonstrated ability to understand and process statistical information and academic research at speed and to use this to make well evidenced recommendations and decisions; and
- The resilience and confidence to make difficult decisions under pressure, in conjunction with the Ofqual Board.

15. Candidates were also expected to be able to demonstrate the following desirable criteria:¹⁰

- Experience in the secondary or further education sector, and in particular an understanding of the role that qualifications play in an effective education and skills system and how they are developed and awarded; and/or
- Experience of working in a regulatory role.

9 Appendix 3: Recruitment information provided by the Department

10 Appendix 3: Recruitment information provided by the Department

The Government's preferred candidate: Sir Ian Bauckham CBE

16. The Secretary of State's preferred candidate is Sir Ian Bauckham CBE. He is currently the interim Chief Regulator, having served in the role since January 2024. Sir Ian served on the Ofqual Board since 2018 and was Chair from January 2021 until January 2024. Prior to becoming interim Chief Regulator, Sir Ian was CEO of the Tenax Multi-Academy Trust, following a career in teaching. He has previously led the Modern Foreign Languages Review for the Department for Education, the Modern Foreign Languages GCSE Content Review, and chaired the Modern Foreign Languages Hubs Programme Board. He chaired the Market Review of Initial Teacher Training between 2020 and 2021 and was knighted for services to education in January 2023. Sir Ian has indicated no political activities as part of the recruitment process. He made two declarations of relevant interest, his roles as Chair of the Board at Oak National Academy and Observer on the Curriculum and Assessment Review Expect Panel.¹¹ The Candidate's CV and supporting statement have been included as appendixes.¹²
17. In the view of the Secretary of State, Sir Ian:
- ... is highly experienced with a deep understanding of the school system, qualifications, and the wide range of issues facing Ofqual, both now and in the future.¹³
18. In line with the guidance drawn up by the Liaison Committee on the conduct of pre-appointment hearings, our questioning sought to test the professional competence and personal independence of the candidate. The Liaison Committee also observes that a Candidate will need to be able to withstand parliamentary and public scrutiny should they take up the post, and that questioning may therefore be robust.¹⁴ We questioned Sir Ian on the following:
- the role and powers of the Chief Regulator of Qualifications and Examinations;
 - the Candidate's priorities, if appointed;
 - how his previous experiences have prepared him for this role;
 - the challenges facing Ofqual today; and
 - the challenges facing the education sector today.

11 Appendix 3: Recruitment information provided by the Department

12 Appendix 4: Candidate's CV; Appendix 5: Candidate's Supporting Statement

13 Appendix 2: Correspondence from the Secretary of State

14 [Liaison Committee, Pre-appointment Hearings, Third Report of Session 2017–19, HC 2307, 19 June 2019](#), paragraph 1

Conclusions

The Committee's views on the suitability of the candidate

19. The Committee held a pre-appointment hearing with the Government's preferred candidate for the Chief Regulator of The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), on 10 December 2024. We agree that Sir Ian Bauckham CBE is appointable to the post.

Wider reflections on the role

20. The Committee recognises Sir Ian's commitment to delivering the core tasks of Ofqual, namely maintaining standards and confidence in qualifications. Sir Ian's ambition to enhance Ofqual's reputation further to be "ever more trusted by the public and by students as the guardian of safe, fair and trustworthy qualifications" is welcome.¹⁵ Sir Ian noted the turnover in Chief Regulators in recent years, and we hope that he fulfils his commitment to serve a full term in office and restore much-needed stability to the organisation.¹⁶
21. Sir Ian's CV details his extensive experience in schools in leadership roles.¹⁷ We note that he has made significant contributions to the education sector, as evidenced by his knighthood, received in 2023. Sir Ian's work in national roles, within Ofqual, and in several schools illustrates his involvement in different education-focused environments. He told us that his roles in schools had provided him with a good understanding of the educational landscape and a deep appreciation of the value of qualifications.¹⁸ His supporting statement shows a passion for the role, and an ambition to ensure Ofqual fulfils its core tasks and priorities during his term.¹⁹

15 [Q8](#)

16 [Qq9-11](#)

17 Appendix 4: Candidate's CV

18 [Q1](#)

19 Appendix 5: Candidate's Supporting Statement

- 22.** The Committee questioned Sir Ian on his background, his motivations for the role, and priorities for Ofqual.²⁰ We asked him about his work to restore stability to the organisation following the appointment of five Chief Regulators in a four-year period.²¹ We additionally spoke to Sir Ian about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) on exam cohorts, his approach to regulating the use of artificial intelligence in the qualifications sectors, and his views on reforms to post-16 qualifications, adjustments for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) during assessments, and the role of T-Levels.²² We will monitor closely how Sir Ian and Ofqual address these issues.

Further scrutiny of Ofqual

- 23.** The Committee holds responsibility for regular scrutiny of Ofqual, in addition to other non-ministerial government departments, and we look forward to scrutinising Sir Ian's implementation of Ofqual's core tasks and priorities.

20 [Q1, Qq7-8](#)

21 [Qq9-11](#)

22 [Qq12-28](#)

Appendix 1: Posts which are subject to pre-appointment hearings before the Education Committee

HM Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills

Children's Commissioner for England

Chief Regulator for Ofqual

Chair of the Office for Students

Appendix 2: Correspondence from the Secretary of State

Letter dated 11 November 2023 from the Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP, Secretary of State for Education, to the Chair of the Education Select Committee, Helen Hayes MP

Preferred candidate for the post of Chief Regulator of the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)

The Department for Education launched a competition to appoint an Ofqual Chief Regulator in December 2023 following the resignation of Dr Jo Saxton.

Following a fair and open recruitment process, conducted in line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments, Sir Ian Bauckham CBE was found to be appointable by the Advisory Assessment Committee and I am pleased to put him forward as the Government's preferred candidate, for the Committee's consideration.

Sir Ian is highly experienced with a deep understanding of the school system, qualifications, and the wide range of issues facing Ofqual, both now and in the future. He has served on the Ofqual Board since 2018 and was Chair from January 2021 until January 2024, when he took up the post of interim Chief Regulator.

Prior to becoming interim Chief Regulator, Sir Ian was CEO of the Tenax Multi-Academy Trust, following a career in teaching. He has previously led the Modern Foreign Languages Review for the Department for Education, the Modern Foreign Languages GCSE Content Review, and chaired the Modern Foreign Languages Hubs Programme Board. He chaired the Market Review of Initial Teacher Training between 2020 and 2021 and was knighted for services to education in January 2023.

All candidates were informed prior to application that the position is subject to scrutiny by the Education Select Committee. I am grateful to the Committee for scheduling a hearing for this purpose on 10 December 2024. In accordance with the guidance on pre-appointment hearings, I attach the candidate pack for the competition (including information about the proposed terms of appointment and remuneration), Sir Ian's CV and Sir Ian's declaration of relevant interests and political activity as required by the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

I look forward to receiving the Committee's conclusions and advice on the appointment in due course.

Appendix 3: Recruitment information provided by the Department

The preferred Candidate - Sir Ian Bauckham CBE

Sir Ian is highly experienced with a deep understanding of the school system, qualifications, and the wide range of issues facing Ofqual, both now and in the future. He has served on the Ofqual Board since 2018 and was Chair from January 2021 until January 2024, when he took up the post of interim Chief Regulator.

Prior to becoming interim Chief Regulator, Sir Ian was CEO of the Tenax Multi-Academy Trust, following a career in teaching. He has previously led the Modern Foreign Languages Review for the Department for Education, the Modern Foreign Languages GCSE Content Review, and chaired the Modern Foreign Languages Hubs Programme Board. He chaired the Market Review of Initial Teacher Training between 2020 and 2021 and was knighted for services to education in January 2023.

Role description and person specification

Role remit

The Chief Regulator / Chief Executive Officer of Ofqual is responsible for delivering on Ofqual's statutory duties, including maintaining standards and promoting confidence in qualifications and assessments.

The main responsibilities of the role are to:

- Lead Ofqual in acting as the independent regulator of qualifications and assessments in England;
- Act as a public face of Ofqual, representing Ofqual to the public, ministers and Parliament;

- Lead public debate in relation to the maintenance of both standards and confidence in examinations, qualifications and assessments;
- Ensure that the awarding organisations delivering regulated qualifications in England execute their roles in a way that is as fair as possible to all students;
- Ensure that qualification reform programmes are delivered successfully, working closely with government and awarding organisations. This will include the development and delivery of the new Advanced British Standard announced by the Prime Minister in October 2023;
- Be responsible for the overall leadership, management, organisation and staffing of the organisation, building capacity and capability to deliver on major qualifications reforms alongside the effective delivery of the existing system;
- Act as the HM Treasury-appointed Accounting Officer for Ofqual, accountable directly to Parliament for the use of Ofqual’s public assets, in line with the requirements set out in [Managing Public Money](#);
- Promote the values underpinning Ofqual, through personal leadership and example; and
- Coordinate and implement policies and actions determined by the Board.

Legislative Framework

The legislative basis for Ofqual is in Part 7 of the Apprenticeships, Children, Skills and Learning Act 2009 (“ASCLA”) (specifically section 127). Ofqual’s functions are set out in Part 7 of, and its constitution is set out in Schedule 9 to, ASCLA.

ASCLA does not assign specific functions to the Chief Regulator—all relevant functions are exercisable by Ofqual as a body corporate.

Paragraph 1 of Schedule 9 to ASCLA provides that Ofqual is to consist of a member appointed by Her Majesty by Order in Council as the chief executive of Ofqual, a member appointed by the Secretary of State to chair Ofqual (“the chair”), and between 7 and 12 members appointed by the Secretary of State (the “ordinary members”).

Paragraph 2 further provides that the person appointed as the chief executive of Ofqual is to be known as the Chief Regulator of Qualifications and Examinations (“the Chief Regulator”).

Schedule 9 also provides that Ofqual may appoint members of staff and establish committees and joint committees (which may in turn establish sub-committees), and may delegate its functions to a member, a member of staff, a committee or a joint committee (which last two can delegate to a sub-committee).

Paragraph 9 of Schedule 9 provides that Ofqual may regulate its own proceedings and the proceedings of any Ofqual committee, and that a joint committee may regulate its own procedure.

Person Specification

As outlined in the job advertisement, the successful candidate was required to demonstrate the following six essential criteria:

- Proven track record of operating successfully in a senior leadership role, including the delivery of major projects - demonstrating the ability to play a key role in the leadership of the English education system and to provide strong and inspirational leadership to Ofqual and to the qualifications and wider education sector through a challenging period;
- A commitment to ensuring that qualifications and assessments are rigorous, valid and reliable;
- The ability to communicate effectively with, and command the respect and inspire the confidence of, Ministers, parliament, awarding organisations and leaders in the education sector and of the Ofqual board and staff, as well as of students, parents and the general public; including the ability to represent Ofqual effectively in the media;
- The ability to navigate the political landscape skilfully, and a good understanding of the government's educational reform programme and the role of the regulator in implementing the reforms;
- Demonstrated ability to understand and process statistical information and academic research at speed and to use this to make well evidenced recommendations and decisions; and
- The resilience and confidence to make difficult decisions under pressure, in conjunction with the Ofqual Board.

The person specification also sets out the following desirable criteria:

- Experience in the secondary or further education sector, and in particular an understanding of the role that qualifications play in an effective education and skills system and how they are developed and awarded; and/or

- Experience of working in a regulatory role.

Term Dates (length of tenure): 1 January 2025–31 December 2030 (5 years).

Remuneration The post was advertised with remuneration of £150,000.

Time Commitment 42 hours per week.

Ofqual Chief Regulator Recruitment Process

Overview

Overview	
Campaign launch date	19/01/2024
Campaign closing date	12/02/2024
Number of applicants	12
Number of candidates invited to interview	2
Number of candidates found appointable	1

Advertisement

The competition was launched on 19 January 2024 for a period of 3 weeks, closing on 12 February. The job advertisement can be found here:

[Appointment details–Chief Regulator, Ofqual–Apply for a public appointment–GOV.UK](#)

Advisory Assessment Panel

As outlined in the Governance Code for Public Appointments, the purpose of the Advisory Assessment Panel is to assist the Secretary of State in his decision-making for the role of the next Chief Regulator.²³ The panel comprised of:

- Juliet Chua CB–Director General, Schools Group (Departmental Official);
- Frances Wadsworth CBE–Interim Chair, Ofqual (Representative of the Board);

²³ Cabinet Office, [Governance Code for Public Appointments](#), December 2016

- Claire Wagner–Head of History at Moreton Hall School (Senior Independent Panel Member); and
- Stuart McMinnies–Non-executive member on the DfE Board (Additional Panel Member).

Sifting of Applications

A total of twelve applications were received when the competition closed. Due to the number of applications, diversity data cannot be shared.

Due to the number of applications being relatively low, there was not a requirement for officials to complete a preliminary sift and all 12 applications were sent to the Advisory Assessment Panel for review.

The panel sift took place on 27 February. All Advisory Assessment Panel members met to decide who, based on the documentation provided, met the bar for interview.

The panel deemed 2 candidates to be suitable for interview. The candidates shortlisted were then approved by Ministers.

Interview stage

The two interviews took place on 17 April in the Sanctuary Buildings and all Panel members were present.

Candidates were tested on their ability to meet the essential criteria in the person specification. Candidates were also asked to declare any interests and were asked about due diligence findings.

During the post-interview discussion and based on the evidence provided by candidates (CV, cover letter and interview performance), the panel collectively agreed that Sir Ian Bauckham was suitable for the role and therefore deemed ‘appointable’. The second candidate did not meet the essential criteria for the role and was therefore not deemed appointable.

Diversity data

Due to the number of applications, diversity data of candidates cannot be shared.

Notes on diversity data

24. Departments must consider their obligations under data protection legislation when sharing this data with select committees. Candidates must be made aware at the outset of the campaign that their data will be shared with the select committee in this way. The data should not be shared in a way which means that individuals are identifiable.
25. Departments should follow ONS guidance on statistical disclosure control to meet this requirement. Where there are fewer than 5 candidates in any given category, diversity data must not be shared as this is potentially identifiable. For example, if you have six women and four men on a shortlist—you should not give any gender information

Annex A - Job Advertisement

Role description

As Chief Regulator / Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Ofqual, you will be responsible for delivering on Ofqual's statutory objectives and duties—including to maintain standards and promote confidence in qualifications and assessments. Your main responsibilities will be to:

- Lead Ofqual in acting as the independent regulator of qualifications and assessments in England.
- Act as a public face of Ofqual, representing Ofqual to the public, Ministers and Parliament.
- Lead public debate in relation to the maintenance of both standards and confidence in examinations, qualifications and assessments.
- Ensure that the awarding organisations delivering regulated qualifications in England execute their roles in a way that is as fair as possible to all students.
- Ensure that qualification reform programmes are delivered successfully, working closely with government and awarding organisations. This will include the development and delivery of the new Advanced British Standard announced by the Prime Minister in October 2023.
- Be responsible for the overall leadership, management, organisation and staffing of the organisation, building capacity and capability to deliver on major qualifications reforms alongside the effective delivery of the existing system.

- Act as the HM Treasury-appointed Accounting Officer for Ofqual, accountable directly to Parliament for the use of Ofqual's public assets, in line with the requirements set out in [Managing public money - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).
- Promote the values underpinning Ofqual, through personal leadership and example.
- Coordinate and implement policies and actions determined by the Board.

Regulation of appointment

This post is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. For more information, please refer to the [Commissioner's website](#).

Person specification

Essential criteria

- Proven track record of operating successfully in a senior leadership role, including the delivery of major projects demonstrating the ability to play a key role in the leadership of the English education system and to provide strong and inspirational leadership to Ofqual and to the qualifications and wider education sector through a challenging period.
- A commitment to ensuring that qualifications and assessments are fair, rigorous, valid and reliable.
- The ability to communicate effectively with, and command the respect and inspire the confidence of, Ministers, Parliament, awarding organisations and leaders in the education sector and of the Ofqual board and staff, as well as of students, parents and the general public; including the ability to represent Ofqual effectively in the media.
- The ability to navigate the political landscape skilfully, and a good understanding of the government's educational reform programme and the role of the regulator in implementing the reforms.
- Demonstrated ability to understand and process statistical information and academic research at speed and to use this to make well evidenced recommendations and decisions.
- The resilience and confidence to make difficult decisions under pressure, in conjunction with the Ofqual Board.

Desirable criteria

- Experience in the secondary or further education sector, and in particular an understanding of the role that qualifications play in an effective education and skills system and how they are developed and awarded; and/or:
- Experience of working in a regulatory role.

Appendix 4: Candidate's CV

Curriculum Vitae

Sir Ian Bauckham CBE

Professional Summary

I am an experienced teacher, headteacher, education chief executive and public sector chair. I have a broad knowledge of the schools and education landscape in England. Since January 2024 I have led Ofqual as Chief Regulator and delivered a successful summer examination and qualifications series.

Current Roles

Chief Regulator of Qualifications and Assessments, Ofqual

Interim from January 2024 onwards

Chair of Board, Oak National Academy (NDPB)

September 2022 to present

Previous Roles

Chief Executive Officer, Tenax Schools Trust

(Multi Academy Trust, SCITT and Teaching School Hub)

2015 to 2023

Chair of Board, Ofqual

January 2021 to 2023

(Led the recovery of examinations and grading after the pandemic)

Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Tunbridge Wells

1996 to 2015 (Academy from 2011, Ofsted *Outstanding* 2012 and 2013)

Deputy Headteacher to 2004; Headteacher 2004–2015

Kingsbury High School, Brent, London

1992–1996

Head of Modern Languages

Voluntary teaching in former GDR, English teaching in Spain 1990–91

Cardinal Newman School, Hove

1985–90

Teacher of Modern Languages; Head of German

National Roles

Observer member, Curriculum and Assessment Review Expert Panel

September 2024 onwards

Chair, Review of Initial Teacher Training

2020–2021

Recommendations led to reforms in initial teacher training content and provision across England

Chair, Oak National Academy (pandemic response)

2020–2022

Founding chair of ground-breaking remote education provision during pandemic

Led development of Regulations and Statutory Guidance for Sex and Relationships Education and PSHE

2017–2021

Led extensive cross-sector and cross-party engagement and consultation; Guidance secured strong cross-party support in Parliament

Chair, Modern Foreign Languages Review (DfE)

Recommendations led to creation of DfE funded National Centre of Excellence in Languages Pedagogy at York University; and then to MFL Hubs from 2023

Chair, MFL GCSE Content Review

2019–2020

Recommendations led to full revision of GCSE MFL specifications in England

Chair, MFL Hubs Programme Board

2023 to 2024

Holding provider to account for £19m public investment in MFL improvement

President, Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)

2013–14

Other Roles

Head Teacher Board (HTB) South East and South London

2014–2017 Elected member

Headteacher Standards Review Group (DfE)

2014 Member

National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)

2015 to 2020 Trustee

Expert Advisory Groups for ECF and NPQ reform

2020–2021, 2023

Trustee, Confederation of School Trusts (CST)

2018–2021

Sabre Charitable Trust (Education charity working in Ghana)

Trustee 2010–2023; Chair of Board 2011–2017

Awards

Appointed CBE in Queen's Birthday Honours 2017 for services to education

Knighthood conferred in New Year's Honours 2023 for services to education

Other Experience

Trainer and consultant for education and school issues, including governing bodies, trust boards, headteachers and trust CEOs, and contributor to education debates locally and nationally (articles, blogs, media). Membership of a number of national advisory and designation groups.

Education

Emerson Park Comprehensive School 1973–1980

A Levels History (Grade A); French (Grade A); German (Grade A)

Cambridge University (Downing College) 1981–1984 (Scholar)

BA (Hons) Modern & Medieval Languages (Class 1)

University of Nottingham 1984–1985

PGCE (Distinction)

University of London (Institute of Education) 1992–94

MA Language in Education (Distinction)

University of London (Heythrop College) 1995–97

MA Philosophy (Distinction)

Interests

Art; music; literature, film, architecture; skiing and trekking; birdwatching.

Appendix 5: Candidate's Supporting Statement

I wish to apply for this important role because I believe in the importance of trustworthy qualifications for all, and because I believe I have the knowledge, experience, interpersonal skills, network and the energy to undertake the role successfully.

Trustworthy qualifications provide accurate information about the education, knowledge and skills of their holders. The standards they describe remain constant over time so that confidence in the accuracy of the qualifications is built and sustained. This is critical for those working towards qualifications as it provides the opportunity for a well-founded pride in their achievement. It is also necessary for the workplace, for further and higher education or training, and for the economy generally. Without trustworthy national qualifications, there would be no universally recognized 'currency' to prove what applicants know and can do. This would act as a drag on the economy, increasing duplication and costs. Trustworthy and reliable qualifications are also a critical lever for driving quality and consistency in education provision.

I am a seasoned educational leader with a reputation for principled leadership, tempered by pragmatism, the ability to bring strong intellectual analysis to bear on difficult problems, and the ability to build strong and trusting relationships. In my school leadership career I have demonstrated these qualities multiple times and have achieved long-term success in raising and maintaining educational standards for young people. As Chair of Ofqual in the wake of the disruption of the pandemic I have been guided by the importance of ensuring that qualifications return to being the trusted, reliable and consistent currency of education. **[REDACTED SENTENCE]**. Achieving our goal involved making many finely balanced judgements to ensure public and political confidence was secured and held. We have also prioritized, and will continue to do so, securing parity of treatment for students taking vocational qualifications, which has involved intensive cross-sector working to get results delivered on time for students on vocational programmes. Engaging closely in these processes has given me extensive knowledge of the qualifications world, vocational, technical and general, its many stakeholders and deep understanding of the interaction between education and qualifications.

I am firmly committed to the independence of qualifications regulation. To retain the trust and confidence of the public, qualifications standards must be objectively and fairly set and maintained and must be independent of political processes. This protects our qualifications from the risk of inflation and safeguards their integrity. I have been clear about this priority in my time both leading the Board of Ofqual and in my role as Chief Regulator (interim). However, close working with government is also critical. Rightly, government sets qualifications content and is responsible to the electorate for qualifications policy more widely. It is Ofqual's role to regulate the awarding of qualifications which government policy determines should exist, and which accredit the content that government determines the qualifications should encompass. This means there must be open dialogue between government and regulator. **[REDACTED SENTENCE]**. I am committed to the current strong collaborative approach which nonetheless preserves the independence of awarding and standards-setting.

I believe I am already a well-recognized public face in the education and qualifications world and have become known as a public face for Ofqual over the past three years since taking over as Chair. I have already undertaken accountability and enquiry hearings with the Commons and Lords Education Select Committees, spoken effectively for Ofqual in the media, including under challenging questioning, and addressed numerous audiences on qualifications matters. I have extensive experience of working with ministers and their advisors on a range of policy questions, including representing Ofqual.

I am a practised and effective communicator and have extensive experience of shaping public attitudes and leading debate. **[REDACTED SENTENCE]**. I have extensive experience of working with communications specialists to further hone the effectiveness of this messaging, and of developing and delivering a strategic approach to communications.

Ofqual regulates general qualifications, principally GCSEs and A Levels, as well as a large number of Vocational and Technical Qualifications. In order to ensure that the quality, validity and reliability, which taken together are a good definition of 'fairness', of all these qualifications are maximized, the Ofqual Board, under my direct leadership, initiated a major refocusing of Ofqual's regulatory activity around 18 months ago. This important work, known as Capability, Capacity and Governance (CCG) assesses risks to fairness and quality across those Awarding Organisations which have the potential to reach most students and apprentices, across both vocational and general qualifications. **[REDACTED SENTENCE]**. This will enable us more effectively to reduce risk before the risk is realized, or, in other words, deal with the potential causes of malfunctioning qualifications before they actually malfunction and either cause harm to students or damage

the reputation of the qualifications. I have taken over this work as Chief Regulator and see clearly how it is making Ofqual's work less reactive and more focused on strengthening the qualifications provider market.

An important role for the independent regulator of qualifications is the provision of expert advice to government when it is developing policy for major qualifications reform. Ofqual has done this in the past to beneficial effect, and it will do so again as the current Advanced British Standard (ABS) reform is developed. During the lead up to the launch of the ABS consultation, Ofqual, which at the time I chaired, supported government in strengthening the assessment and awarding dimensions of this important reform in 16–19 qualifications, using the evidence-based expertise of Ofqual to do so. Likewise, as we move towards the White Paper later this spring, Ofqual under my leadership will provide expert advice and co-develop proposals for ensuring that the ABS qualification is assessed such that it provides an accurate account of students' knowledge and abilities, in a way which enables standards to be established and maintained over time, and so that public confidence can be secured and maintained. I am very much looking forward to continuing this work.

I already have extensive experience of the corporate leadership of Ofqual, initially as Chair and now as Chief Executive and Chief Regulator. I have been closely involved in securing strong, experienced and well-qualified leadership across Ofqual's directorates, and a strong and knowledgeable Deputy Chief Regulator now supports the Chief Regulator in the leadership and management of the organisation. Reporting lines are clear and established, and governance is strong. The Board is well known to me, and my clear and effective leadership since 2021 has been appreciated by them. Relationships within the executive team are highly positive, and the most recent People Survey shows strong scores relating to employee job satisfaction and commitment to the organization and its work. Because of my longstanding knowledge of the organisation, and previous experience of running an academy trust of a not dissimilar size, I believe I have the necessary qualities to maintain and further develop Ofqual in the future.

I have been accountable for the financial performance and for value for money across a range of publicly funded organisations. These include as an academy trust CEO; in Ofqual in my role both as Chair and now as Chief executive and Accounting Officer; and in Oak National Academy NDPB. I understand the accountabilities the Accounting Officer in public organisations holds for how all public money is spent by the organisation, and the imperative of achieving value for money in every spending decision. In every role, I have taken this accountability with the utmost seriousness. As Ofqual Chair, a comprehensive review of the organisation's strategic plan has taken place and been scrutinised and ultimately approved by the Board. A main thrust has been to ensure the organisation's spending clearly reflects

the plan and delivers Ofqual's statutory objectives. At Oak I have ensured as chair that the planned budget of the organisation directly addresses the priorities set for it including via the Secretary of State's Chair's Letter, which sets out delivery priorities and parameters. I am familiar with HMT expectations as set out in Managing Public Money for sound financial management in government departments and have undertaken HMT's recommended training for AOs. I have been part of Ofqual's Audit and Risk and Finance Committees and value the scrutiny and accountability effective governance brings.

I believe I am already demonstrating that I embody and exemplify the values underpinning Ofqual. The statutory responsibilities underpin all our strategic and operational work, and I articulate these and embed them in all relevant discussions. We have recently re-articulated these through a new statement of organisational culture. We are clear that under the umbrella of our statutory objectives our approach is to apply expertise, to bring clarity and to solve problems. This supports the values of the Civil Service code and enables us to achieve our aim of regulating on behalf of students and apprentices. I also embrace and embody the values of public service set out in the Nolan principles for public life.

Finally, not least in the light of my recent role as Chair over a three year period, I am committed to working closely with the Ofqual Board to ensure that the Board is well-informed and can exercise its statutory responsibilities wisely. I am very conversant with the legal requirements of the effective governance of Ofqual and understand exactly how powers and responsibilities are held and delegated within the organisation. I have a good professional relationship with the interim Chair and look forward to working equally effectively with the permanent appointment in due course.

In conclusion, I trust that this summary demonstrates that I am very well equipped to continue to fulfil the role of Chief Regulator and to lead Ofqual into its next phase.

Sir Ian Bauckham CBE

Chief Regulator (interim)

Appendix 6: Candidate Questionnaire

Sir Ian Bauckham CBE, response to Education Select Committee questions

Motivation

1. What motivated you to apply for this role, and what specific experiences would you bring to it?

Before moving to Ofqual as interim Chief Regulator I spent nearly four decades working in schools as a teacher and a school leader. My motivation has always been to make a positive difference, through the transformative power of education, to the life chances of young people. I have been fortunate to have been able to make a contribution to education on a national level, always with the same motivation, including as president of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and through leading a number of education reform initiatives. I was also the Chair of the Ofqual Board for three years, spanning the return to normal qualifications arrangements post Covid. I have now had almost a full year's experience of leading Ofqual as interim Chief Regulator. I applied for the substantive role when it was advertised because I believe that my career-long experience in education equips me to exercise clear and effective leadership in the field of qualifications and assessment. I have seen the importance of fair and trustworthy qualifications to students who take them, to schools, colleges and others who prepare students for them, and for employers and others who rely on them. Qualifications, as a currency for educational achievement, accredit achievement and open up opportunities. I believe my experience and knowledge have equipped me to lead Ofqual and serve as Chief Regulator.

2. If appointed are there specific areas within your new responsibilities where you will need to acquire new skills or knowledge?

As I go about my work as Chief Regulator I am constantly learning. Through listening to the views and ideas of colleagues, educators, employers and many others, I am challenged to think more deeply and in new ways about education in general and about qualifications in particular. I keep myself up to date with new publications and research in the field. The past four years, three as Board Chair and one as Chief Regulator, have enabled me to deepen my knowledge of vocational and technical qualifications, including those taken in Further Education. I would like to continue to deepen my knowledge across all areas for which I will have responsibility to enable me to take decisions equipped with the best possible knowledge base. I have sought out a number of opportunities to develop my knowledge of regulation over the past four years, including connecting with other regulators through the Institute for Regulation. I would aim to continue to develop and apply my knowledge of regulation if confirmed in post. Finally, I believe there is learning to be derived from international perspectives in assessment and qualifications. I will therefore use opportunities to further my knowledge of qualifications in other jurisdictions through research publications and dialogue with expert colleagues.

3. How were you recruited? Were you encouraged to apply, and if so, by whom?

When I accepted the one year interim role of Chief Regulator, I was aware that the substantive post would be advertised. Very soon after starting the substantive role I made the decision that I would apply for it when the time came. The post was advertised at the end of January 2024 and I applied for it at the start of February. I was not specifically encouraged to apply by anyone, although I indicated my intentions informally to DfE officials at an early stage. I was then interviewed by a panel, and following that, was informed that I was the then Secretary of State's preferred candidate. Following the July 2024 election, I was told that I was also the preferred candidate of the new Secretary of State.

Personal Background

4. Do you currently or potentially have any business, financial or other non-pecuniary interests or commitments, that might give rise to the perception of a conflict of interest if you are appointed?

- How do you intend to resolve any potential conflicts of interests if you are appointed?

Alongside my role as Chief Regulator, I currently chair the Board of the Oak National Academy, a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of the Department for Education (DfE). I had already been appointed to this role when I took on the role of interim Chief Regulator and have discharged it alongside this role over the past year. While I do not believe there has been an actual conflict of interests between the two roles, if confirmed as Chief Regulator, I would wish to step away from the Oak Chair role when practical to do so.

I am also an observer member of the DfE's Curriculum and Assessment Review (CAR) appointed as such by the Secretary of State for Education. I am not part of the CAR in a decision-making capacity but am able to be consulted for input or advice. I believe this to be a positive and appropriate opportunity for CAR. There is a specific agreement in place setting out how any conflicts, should they arise, between my role on CAR and my role as Chief Regulator would be managed. The CAR is time-limited as it is due to report its findings in summer 2025.

I have no other business, financial or other non-pecuniary interests or commitments.

5. If appointed, what professional or voluntary work commitments will you continue to undertake, or do you intend to take on, alongside your new role?

- How will you reconcile these with your new role?

If my appointment is confirmed, I would wish to stand aside from my role as Chair of Oak National Academy when practical to do so. I do not plan to take on any further professional or voluntary work commitments.

6. Have you ever held any post or undertaken any activity that might cast doubt on your political impartiality?

• If so, how will you demonstrate your political impartiality in the role if appointed?

No. I have not held any political posts or undertaken any political activity.

7. Do you intend to serve your full term of office?

Yes.

Ofqual

8. If appointed, what will be your main priorities on taking up the role?

My main priorities will fall into three broad areas.

Firstly, I will aim to maintain standards and public confidence in the qualifications being taken currently by young people and other learners. For the hundreds of thousands of people preparing for qualifications, those teaching them and those who will use their qualifications to make decisions about employment or further or higher education, it is vital that the current system remains stable and resilient. This is a very significant undertaking as the system is large and diverse, and it faces a range of risks each year.

My second priority will be to research, prepare for and in due course implement future change to the qualifications system. Change may be occasioned by a range of factors. Fast developing technology, including AI, is likely to impact qualifications, as many facets of life, and may present both opportunities and challenges for qualifications. Decisions about changes to the qualifications landscape may come from government, in the light of evolving national priorities, for example arising from CAR recommendations, and it will be Ofqual's responsibility to ensure such changes can be implemented in a way which secures public confidence and reports student achievement accurately and reliably. Paying attention to resilience and preparing for the unexpected is also critical. I will aim further to enhance Ofqual's resilience, and the resilience of the qualifications system, to unexpected shocks.

My third priority will be to lead and run Ofqual effectively and efficiently at a time of financial pressure, to ensure that it makes its decisions based on evidence and independently, as Parliament intended at its creation in 2009, and that it discharges its accountability to Parliament for meeting its statutory objectives and duties.

9. What criteria should the Committee use to judge your/Ofqual's performance over your term of office?

The role of Ofqual was set out by Parliament by the statutory objectives and duties assigned to it in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009). These include, amongst other responsibilities, the requirement to ensure that qualifications give a reliable indication of knowledge, understanding and skills across time and between different awarding organisations; promoting the development and implementation of National Assessments which give a reliable indication of knowledge, skill and understanding over time and maintaining public confidence in regulated qualifications and National Assessments. The organisation has duties including to facilitate innovation in qualifications; and having regard to the needs of those who take, and those who use, regulated qualifications. The Act also sets out accountability arrangements for Ofqual, including that the Chief Regulator is the Accounting Officer.

More personally, as a regulator, I would like Ofqual to prioritise long term stewardship of the qualifications system to ensure that good quality qualifications play their full role in good education for all students and apprentices. In particular, I would like my period in office to be characterised by a strong focus on vocational and technical qualifications and the opportunities they can provide for learners.

I would hope to be judged in this role against these, and other, areas of responsibility set out in the Act.

10. How will you protect and enhance your personal independence and the institutional independence of Ofqual from the Government/ministers?

My personal independence in matters relating to Ofqual's role and that of the organisation, is critical for the credibility of qualifications and standards. I will at all times act with independence and without fear or favour on all matters relating to standards to ensure that student performance, both at individual and at aggregate level, is reported via qualifications accurately and reliably, as per the requirements of the Act. I already have experience at delivering sometimes difficult messages to both ministers and senior government officials, and I consider it my responsibility to do so where necessary. Government is responsible for education provision, for determining qualifications policy, and in many cases determining the content of the curriculum. Assessment of how well students perform in the light of that provision must be regulated independently, otherwise qualifications may become debased and lose credibility, and the true state of the nation's educational performance may not be accurately reported.

Ofqual's institutional independence is invested in its Board, though discharged in the main by the Chief Regulator, who is also a Board member. In order to safeguard Ofqual's institutional independence from government and ministers, it is important that the Board continues to deliberate and reach decisions relating to its statutory responsibilities freely and without the influence, or, indeed, the appearance of influence, from government.

11. How do you assess the public profile and reputation of Ofqual?

Ofqual must always aspire to be a trusted and well-respected regulator and guarantor of fairness and reliability in qualifications. It has made a strong recovery from the undoubtedly challenging period of the pandemic, supported through a focus on the interests of students and apprentices and by managing an effective return to normal approaches to assessment and qualifications after the pandemic. The organisation has learnt much from that experience, and is now, I believe, well placed to continue to undertake the roles outlined elsewhere in this document. However, I am clear that Ofqual under my leadership must continue to learn and grow, always attentive to evolving public sentiment and government policy. It must engage deeply and regularly with stakeholders to understand the perspectives of the various sectors it serves.

12. What risks do you think Ofqual will face over your term of office?

• How do you intend to manage them?

The principal risks Ofqual is likely to face fall into the following domains.

Firstly, there is a set of risks related to the maintenance of standards, public confidence and quality in qualifications as they are taken now. Mitigating these risks requires constant vigilance and monitoring, and prompt and effective action, including where appropriate enforcement action, where necessary. I will prioritise vigilance and prompt action where needed in this area, as indeed I have done over the past year.

Secondly, there are risks relating to the safe and timely delivery of qualifications to students to enable progression. There are many areas in which this could go wrong, and I will seek to continue resilience work across all main points of vulnerability both to reduce likelihood of occurrence and to mitigate impact should they nonetheless materialise. An example of this kind of risk is a major cyber incident, meaning an awarding organisation may be unable to deliver results of qualifications on time to students, impacting on student progression. Ofqual under my leadership is strongly focussed on planning for eventualities such as these, as well as on using its influence to ensure that awarding organisations take their responsibilities with regard to system security very seriously.

Thirdly, there is a set of risks relating to the rapidly evolving context in which we live. An example is the risk of malpractice, leading to unfairness, relating to AI in student work submitted for qualifications. I have been clear with awarding organisations that they must put in place steps to manage this risk, and detect any form of plagiarism, including using AI, and am monitoring their response carefully to ensure that expectation is met. It may be, however, given the rapid growth of AI, that action to safeguard fairness in this area will need to be further strengthened. A second example relates to fairness for students taking qualifications across the socio-economic spectrum. An expectation of digitisation of the qualifications system could leave some students, who find themselves on the wrong side of the 'digital divide', disadvantaged in relation to their peers when taking examinations or assessments. Ofqual will therefore need to proceed with greater caution than might be expected by some in order to make sure that unfairness at the point of assessment is minimised.

Finally, there is an area of risk relating to resource. Like all government departments, Ofqual needs a sufficient level of resource to deliver its responsibilities in a fast evolving context. Developments in AI and digitisation more generally, as well as possible reforms, will place novel demands on Ofqual. Moreover, in recent years the regulated qualifications market has already grown significantly in size. These and other developments will in all likelihood intensify the need for resource, both human, in the form of expert workforce, and financial. Inability to draw down sufficient resource may limit Ofqual's effectiveness to regulate fairly and effectively. I will mitigate this set of risks through careful planning, rigorous prioritisation, and honest communication within government departments about changing needs. I will also ensure that the Education Select Committee is kept informed should I believe that Ofqual's resource is not adequate to expectations of it.

Formal minutes

Tuesday 10 December

Members present:

Helen Hayes, in the Chair

Jess Asato

Mrs Sureena Brackenridge

Darren Paffey

Manuela Perteghella

Mark Swards

Patrick Spencer

Caroline Voaden

Appointment of Sir Ian Bauckham CBE as Chief Regulator of the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)

Draft Report (Appointment of Sir Ian Bauckham CBE as Chief Regulator of the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 23 read and agreed to.

The Candidate's curriculum vitae and supporting documents were appended to the Report as Appendices.

Resolved, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 134.

Adjournment

[Adjourned till Tuesday 17 December 2024 at 09.30am]

Witness

The following witness gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 10 December 2024

Sir Ian Bauckham CBE, Government's preferred candidate

[Q1-28](#)