

Seema Malhotra MP  
Member of Parliament for Feltham and Heston  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

23 November 2023

By email: [seema.malhotra.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:seema.malhotra.mp@parliament.uk)

Dear Seema Malhotra,

The Department for Education (DfE) has asked me to respond to you directly regarding the following Parliamentary Question:

**To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to priority 21 of Strategic Guidance to the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, published in March 2023, what the progress the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education has made on identifying occupational routes that have low, or no relevant level 4-5 standards. 816**

There are currently 151 approved level 4-5 standards across the 15 occupational routes.

Each route within the economy is uniquely structured, reflecting the nature of occupations within a sector and its history of occupational development. In some sectors there will be occupations at every level from level 2 to level 7 – the health sector, for example. In others there may be gaps where it would be typical for a worker to move from a level 3 occupation to a level 6 occupation, for instance from Emergency Contact Handler (level 3) to Police Constable (level 6). The occupational maps reflect this.

The only occupational route with no approved level 4-5 standards is Hair and Beauty. In the Hair and Beauty route there is now one level 5 occupation, Aesthetic Practitioner Skin Rejuvenation, with a proposal approved and standard development in progress.

In Catering and Hospitality there is a low number of level 4-5 standards (currently two). IfATE is working with employers in the early stages of developing additional standards for both Hair and Beauty and Catering and Hospitality.

In the Transport and Logistics route there are five level 4-5 approved standards but these are all currently out of scope for Higher Technical Qualifications on the advice of our Transport and Logistics employer panel. The employer panel thought that

there would be safety concerns regarding these occupations being taught outside of a workplace and so they are only available as apprenticeships. We are working with stakeholders, regulatory bodies and the employer panel to explore how new or adapted standards could be developed in this route to enable us to open it up to Higher Technical Qualification applications.

Where standards do not exist for an established occupation, IfATE works with employer representatives to identify if there is demand for the development of a new occupational standard to underpin apprenticeships or technical qualifications.

Working alongside the Department for Education, IfATE has also identified existing level 4 and 5 qualifications that could align to an occupational standard that does not yet exist. Work is ongoing to reach out to employers in these identified industries encouraging them to participate in a trailblazer group to create the relevant occupational standard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Coupland". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Jennifer Coupland**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education**