

## PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS BILL

### AMENDMENT TO BE MOVED ON REPORT

Clause 7, page 5, line 1 at end insert – “(2) Before making arrangements under subsection (1), the Secretary of State must

- (i) consult on those arrangements with such persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate and
- (ii) having consulted, seek the consent of the Scottish Ministers, the Welsh Ministers and a Northern Ireland Department.

(3) If consent to the making of the arrangements is not given by any of those authorities within the period of one month beginning with the day on which it is sought from that authority, the Secretary of State may make the arrangements without that consent.

(4) If arrangements are made in reliance on subsection (3), the Secretary of State must publish a statement explaining why the Secretary of State decided to make the arrangements without the consent of the authority or authorities concerned.”

#### Effect

This amendment requires the Secretary of State to consult on those arrangements with such persons as the Secretary of State considers and seek the consent of the devolved administrations prior to making arrangements for the assistance centre.

#### Reason

We welcome the provisions regarding the assistance centre to provide advice and assistance about entry requirements to those seeking to practise a profession in the UK or to those with UK qualifications seeking to practise overseas. We note the obligation on regulators contained in subsection (2) to provide the designated assistance centre with any information it may need to carry out its functions. This seems entirely appropriate in the circumstances. The obligation to make arrangements for the assistance centre lies on the Secretary of State. However, the assistance centre will provide advice and assistance covering the whole UK. Accordingly, we consider it important that the Secretary of State should consult with such persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate before making the arrangements and having consulted seek the consent of the devolved administrations. This last approach reflects that contained in sections 6, 8, 10, 18, 21 and Schedule 3 of the United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/27/contents/enacted>. Consulting with appropriate persons and seeking the consent of the devolved administrations is important where the Assistance Centre may be dealing with providing advice relating to professions which are within the devolved sphere (and reflects the acknowledgement of the role of the devolved administrations in earlier clauses in the bill).