

VTQ students - getting your results this summer

The continuing pandemic has led to some exams and assessments being cancelled in 2021. All parts of the education system are working together to ensure that learners are still able to get their results and carry on with their lives, whether that is to continue with their education, further their career, or go into the workplace.

We appreciate that this is an enormously stressful time for learners – there has been a great deal of uncertainty, and many will have missed out not just on teaching and learning, but on the support offered by face-to-face contact with fellow students, friends, and family.

The way that vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs) will be awarded in 2021 allows for the challenges that are unique to this year – such as the fact that many students will have missed teaching and learning due to multiple lockdowns, so not all will have covered all the content, especially those on 2-year academic courses.

For those qualifications that are most like GCSEs, AS and A levels teacher judgement will play a central role, more so in some qualifications than others. For qualifications that require a demonstration of occupation or professional competence /proficiency, exams and assessments will still go ahead this year either remotely, or in person where it is safe to do so.

These arrangements are not a perfect substitute for you being able to study and get assessed as you would in an ordinary year, but they will enable you to be awarded a qualification and to progress in your learning or employment.

What does this mean for you?

This means that the way in which you receive a grade this year will depend on the type VTQ you are taking.

Qualifications that are similar to GCSEs, AS or A levels

If you are studying for a qualification that is similar to, or taken alongside GCSEs, AS or A levels, then you will be eligible for a teacher assessed grade. This will require your teacher or lecturer to make an informed judgement on your result using a variety of evidence, such as performance of tasks or assessments that have already been completed. These judgements will be quality assured within your college or training provider, and then by the awarding organisation that you are registered with before you get your result.

Examples of these types of qualification are BTECs (Pearson) and OCR Cambridge Technicals, in subjects such as Business, Digital Media and Health & Social Care.

You should receive your results in line with students who are studying for GCSEs, AS and A levels.

Qualifications that require a demonstration of occupation or professional competence or proficiency

If you are studying for a qualification that that requires a demonstration of occupation or professional competence or proficiency, then you will need to be assessed on your practical skills before you can get your certificate and progress to the workplace.

Assessments for these types of qualifications should be continuing where possible, although your assessment may be held in slightly different circumstances to normal (using remote assessment for example) or may be adapted in another way. Or your assessment may need to be delayed until it can be carried out safely in line with public health guidance.

Examples of these types of qualification are plumbing, accountancy, performing arts, construction, and veterinary work.

These arrangements will enable you to get a result that will allow you to progress.

Qualifications that are taken when you are ready to do

For qualifications that are taken when you are ready to do so, such as Functional Skills and ESOL Skills for Life, there are three ways you will be able to access an assessment:

- 1: Assessments can continue to take place, in a college, training provider, employer premises, school, or alternative location, where it is safe for them to do so in line with public health guidance. Taking an assessment will enable you to get your results more quickly than going through a process that requires evidence to be gathered to support a teacher assessed grade.
- 2: Assessments can be taken online in a wider range of venues, including at home.
3. Where neither of these options is possible, and you need a result to progress, then you may be able to receive a teacher assessed grade.

This flexibility will enable you to quickly progress to the next stage of your studies or employment this year and not be delayed. It will also ensure that, if you need a Functional Skills qualification to complete your apprenticeship, that you will be able to progress and move into employment.

Speak to your college, training provider or school about which options are offered by the awarding organisation that you are registered with.

Arrangements for private candidates

Awarding organisations are required to include private candidates in their arrangements as far as possible.

Learners who were offered, or who sat, January exams

For those VTQs most like GCSEs, AS and A levels, if you were absent from January exams, or if you sat an exam but feel that your performance in the exams was adversely affected by the pandemic and the most recent lockdown, you may still be able to receive a result using a teacher assessed grade.

Talk to your college, training provider or school about the arrangements being offered by the awarding organisation that you are registered with.

What you can expect next

Your teacher should soon be able to let you know what is happening with your qualification – whether you will be expected to take your assessments, or if your results will be awarded using teacher assessed grades. Please continue to study in the meantime.

The awarding organisation responsible for awarding your qualification, such as Pearson or OCR, will be contacting your college, training provider or school to let them know what they need to do so that you can get your result.

Resources

Coming soon... Ofqual is collecting data from all awarding organisations about how results for each type of qualification will be awarded and, in the next few weeks, will publish this information in an interactive 'explainer tool,' that will be made available at: <https://analytics.ofqual.gov.uk/apps/AllQualifications/summer2020tool/>.

This will be similar to the one that was made available over the summer and will help you find out quickly how results for your qualifications will be awarded this year.

Useful links:

- [How qualifications will be awarded in 2021 – an article from Chief Regulator, Simon Lebus](#)
- [Simon Lebus responds to the Secretary of State's direction of 23 February 2021](#)
- [Consultation on alternative arrangements for the award of VTQs and other general qualifications in 2021](#) (Concluded consultation)
- [Regulatory arrangements for the awarding of vocational and technical and other general qualifications in 2020-2021](#) (Live consultation)