

Awarding of vocational qualifications – Frequently Asked Questions



Q: I'm studying a Vocational Qualification – will I get a result this Summer?

Learners taking vocational qualifications for progression to higher and further education are in scope to receive a calculated result. We consider that this could apply to those who would have expected to have completed their assessments and/or received certificates between March and the end of July.

Calculated results will draw appropriately on a range of evidence, depending on the structure of the qualification. They may be based in part on teacher, trainer or tutor judgements of what result each learner would most likely have achieved had they been able to complete their assessments in summer 2020. Any centre¹ assessment grade will be based on a range of evidence held by the school, college or training provider.

Q: How will calculating results work in practice?

Depending on the structure of the qualification, centres may be asked to provide a centre assessment grade for the whole qualification, or for uncompleted modules or units.

There might be some instances where they are asked to provide a rank order of learners (as with GCSEs, AS and A levels). The awarding body offering the qualification will use any centre assessed judgement, combined with other relevant information, to determine the most appropriate calculated result. For example, many learners will already have completed assessments in some modules or units, which will be taken into account.

Q: How do I find out more about a specific qualification?

We are working with awarding bodies to develop the principles of the approach to be used for progression qualifications, such that in the same circumstances, the same approach to calculating results would be used, and that it is deliverable for everyone involved. It will be important to ensure that, as far as possible, standards are maintained, such that everyone can continue to have confidence in the qualifications and they retain their currency.

¹ Centres (typically schools, colleges or training providers) are bodies that deliver assessments (and other activities) to learners on behalf of awarding bodies.

Q: Should I contact my awarding body directly?

Awarding bodies will be in touch with schools, colleges and training providers in the coming weeks to advise them on the information they will be expected to provide about their learners, and when and how it should be submitted.

If you want to follow your awarding bodies latest updates, here are some useful links:

AAT	Cambridge Assessment English	LIBF	Pearson	STA	WJEC
Ascentis	City and Guilds	NCFE	Qualifications Network	Trinity College London	YMCA awards
Agored Cymru	EAL	NOCN	Qualsafe Awards	UAL	
Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music	Highfield Qualifications	OCR	RSL	VTCT	

Q: When will I get my result?

We want this process to be completed in a timely way so that learners can progress, and the aim is for them to receive results at the same time as GCSEs, AS and A level results.

Q: I'm a private candidate – how will I get my result?

We are working with awarding bodies to consider carefully how to protect the interests of private candidates, who may not have a relationship with a school, college or training provider that is able to submit centre-assessed judgements.

Q: What will happen with other vocational qualifications that are designated to support progression to employment?

We are working with awarding bodies to identify qualifications in this group where it might still be possible to generate a calculated result. Where this is not possible, or not appropriate, we will encourage adaptations to be made to assessments or to delivery models (for example changing invigilation requirements or moving to remote moderation) as long as this does not undermine the reliability of the result and where assessments can still take place in line with social distancing guidelines, even though centre-based provision has been suspended.

In some cases where qualifications directly signal occupational competence or function as a licence to practise, it may not be safe or meet employers' requirements to do either of these, and there may be no option but to wait until normal assessments can happen again.

Q: What happens next?

We continue to work closely with awarding bodies, regulators in England and Northern Ireland and the wider sector to provide vocational learners with results this Summer. We are working with Ofqual who will confirm the lists of qualifications that are in scope for each category (the award of calculated results, adaptation of assessments and rescheduling).

Further detail on the approach will follow after Easter.