

Letter to learners re outcomes of Ofqual consultation

25 February 2021



Dear Learner

Information for learners about assessment arrangements for vocational qualifications

We [wrote to you](#) on 9 February about arrangements for vocational qualifications this year. Following today's announcements made by Ofqual, we are now able to provide you with further information about the assessment arrangements for vocational qualifications for Summer 2021.

In January, Ofqual held a consultation to ask for views on the arrangements for vocational qualifications. That consultation has now closed and Ofqual has published the [findings](#).

Many vocational qualifications taken in Wales are also taken in England and Northern Ireland. Some vocational qualifications, such as Essential Skills and those in Health and Social Care, and Childcare, are only available in Wales. As regulator for qualifications, we've made sure that the approach to awarding vocational qualifications in 2021 is the same, regardless of where they are taken.

I'm taking a qualification that is similar to an A level or GCSE. How will I get a grade?

If you are taking a qualification that is similar to A levels or GCSEs, such as BTECs, WJEC Vocational Awards and Applied Certificates and Diplomas or the new Health and Social Care: Principles and Contexts qualifications, then your grades will be determined by your school or college based on a range of assessment information.

As with A levels and GCSEs, your school or college will ensure that the assessment of your work is on topics that you've been able to cover during the course, so you are not at a disadvantage from this process.

Awarding bodies will be providing more information about their specific requirements over the next few weeks. You should receive your result no later than

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learners who are studying A levels and GCSEs. A level results will be published on 10 August and GCSE results on 12 August.

My qualification is not similar to a GCSE or A level but I need it to progress.

What happens to me?

Some qualifications support progression to further study or employment but are not similar to GCSEs or A levels, such as Essential Skills Wales qualifications. Exams and assessments for these qualifications can continue where it is safe to do so, remotely or in person. Adaptations that have been put in place will still be available. If you are unable to take the assessment when you need to, then alternative arrangements will be available for you to give you every chance to progress. Awarding bodies will provide guidance to centres on the alternative arrangements.

Essential Skills Wales qualifications will continue to be available, but if you cannot take the assessments due to the impact of COVID-19, then you will be able to receive a result based on the judgement of your teacher or assessor. They will use a range of assessment information, which could include assessments that you have completed at your school, college or training provider, or at home. More information about their specific requirements will be provided by awarding bodies over the next few weeks.

I'm taking a qualification that requires me to demonstrate practical or occupational competency. Will I be able to get a result?

If you are taking a qualification that requires you to demonstrate practical skills, such as plumbing, construction, performing arts or hairdressing, then you will need to be assessed on your practical skills before you can qualify. Your assessments should be continuing as normal where possible, although they may be held in a different way, for example remotely or with slightly different tasks. In some cases, your assessments may need to be delayed until they can be carried out safely in line with public health guidance. Welsh Government has published [operational guidance](#) to support centres to get learners back safely.

How can I find more information about my qualification?

Check the awarding body's website for more information on the approach for each qualification. The awarding body will be sending more information to your school, college or training provider about what you will need to do to complete your qualification as soon as possible. You can also look out for the Ofqual explainer tool, which will be published during March where you will be able to search for the approach for your qualification, including qualifications only available in Wales.

Qualifications Wales Learner Advisory Group

We're setting up a Learner Advisory Group that will help us talk to learners and understand what they need from us. We welcome applications from a range of learners from different backgrounds, including those studying vocational qualifications, to ensure we have broad representation on this group. The closing date to apply is 7 March and there is more information about what is required on our [website](#).

We will be publishing more information about awarding in summer 2021 as we can. There is information on our [website](#) and we update this regularly.

Yours sincerely,



Philip Blaker

Chief Executive