

FEWEEK

BRIEFING COVID-19 | Vocational qualifications guidance from Ofqual

Date: Tuesday 14 April | **Time:** 14:00 – 15:30

Have a question?

Please use the comment box to submit your question. Nick will review all incoming questions and try to ask as many as possible during the session.

Some **BREAKING NEWS** first

DfE this morning: “We will not publish any institution-level qualification achievement rates in the national achievement rate tables for the 2019 to 2020 academic year in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19). The department will still consider publishing national data for the 2019 to 2020 academic year.”

“We will not run the primary, secondary or 16 to 18 school and college performance data checking exercises and will not return any pupil level or institution level data on the 2020 grades to schools and colleges.”

“Schools and colleges should not use the 2020 exams data as part of their teacher performance management process.”

<https://feweek.co.uk/2020/04/14/dfc-cancels-achievement-rates-publication-in-2021-for-all-providers/>

FEWEEK

Briefing agenda

More than 2,500 registered for this webinar

14:05 Summary of Ofqual announcement - Nick Linford, FE Week

14:30 Q&A with David Phillips, City & Guilds

14:45 Q&A with David Gallagher, NCFE

15:00 Q&A with Cindy Rampersaud, Pearson

15:15 Q&A with Tom Bewick, Federation of Awarding Bodies

15:30 End

Slides and video will be sent to you later this afternoon

FE WEEK



Ministerial direction

The Secretary of State, Gavin Williamson, tells Ofqual what they must do



[Direction to the Chief Regulator of Ofqual about GCSE, AS and A Level qualifications](#)

PDF, 199KB, 2 pages



[Direction to the Chief Regulator of Ofqual about vocational and technical qualifications, and other general qualifications](#)

PDF, 175KB, 5 pages

“As with GCSEs, AS and A levels, it is the Government's policy that assessments cannot proceed as planned this spring and summer for vocational and technical qualifications given the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures that the Government is taking to reduce its impact.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-issued-to-the-chief-regulator-of-ofqual>

FE WEEK



Principle of fairness

“It is my intention that students enrolled on these [vocational and technical] qualifications are not disadvantaged with respect to their peers in the same cohort taking GCSEs, AS and A levels. Therefore, students and other learners who are taking vocational and technical qualifications that are used for progression to and through employment, further or higher education should be issued a set of results this summer in order to allow them to progress to the next stage of their lives

“I understand that flexibility and pragmatism will be needed and that different types of qualification will likely require different approaches – a blanket approach for all qualifications is not feasible. However, these different approaches must be within a framework set by Ofqual’s rules, and based, as far as possible, on the principle of fairness.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-issued-to-the-chief-regulator-of-ofqual>

FEWEEK



Extraordinary regulatory framework

“In order to promote consistency, as far as possible, Ofqual should set out the permitted approaches in an extraordinary regulatory framework developed specifically for responding to this unprecedented health pandemic, as well as the circumstances in which they may be used. It will be important that awarding organisations know which qualifications are subject to this framework. I would be grateful if Ofqual could provide me with advice setting out its views as to which qualifications fall within each category and I shall then determine a list of qualifications which will be subject to Ofqual’s extraordinary regulatory framework. ”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-issued-to-the-chief-regulator-of-ofqual>

FEWEEK



Teacher calculated results

“Calculated results could be based in part on teacher, trainer or tutor judgements of their ability, where appropriate, in combination with a range of other evidence. A number of students will already have completed assessments in some modules and, where that evidence usually counts towards a result, it could be taken into account. I recognise that a wide range of different approaches to estimation and scaling will be required for vocational qualifications given the differences between the qualifications. However, I would expect that, where appropriate, statistical techniques based on students’ results in previous years, on these and on their academic qualifications, will form part of the adopted approach.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-issued-to-the-chief-regulator-of-ofqual>

FEWEEK



Innovative approaches

“In order to ensure that students and other learners taking these qualifications can progress with a result this summer, it is Government policy that firstly, consideration should be given to adapting the assessments or delivery models where this would not undermine the reliability of the result. Only if this is not possible, should delay be considered. Such an approach aligns with that taken by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education in relation to apprenticeships.

“I recognise that adaption of assessments will be challenging but I am confident that Ofqual and awarding organisations can work together to develop innovative approaches, during this unprecedented situation.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-issued-to-the-chief-regulator-of-ofqual>

FEWEEK



Functional skills get specific mention

“Where qualifications have the primary purpose of supporting progression to employment or further or higher education, it is the Government's policy that the starting point for these qualifications should be the provision of calculated results.

“It is the Government’s policy that learners due to take assessments for Functional Skills Qualifications before the end of the summer, receive a calculated result rather than an adapted or postponed assessment.”

Note: FS the only voc qual actually mentioned in the letter. Probably Gavin asserting his authority because of a disagreement with Ofqual

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-issued-to-the-chief-regulator-of-ofqual>

FEWEEK



Plea to ensure the reliability of results

“I recognise that there will be some students and other learners taking qualifications falling within the scope of this direction who cannot be provided with a result this summer because there is simply no way in which a valid result can be calculated, or an assessment adapted while still remaining fit for purpose.

“I would ask Ofqual to work to minimise these instances as far as possible and know that Ofqual will work with awarding organisations to do all that can be done to ensure the reliability of results.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-issued-to-the-chief-regulator-of-ofqual>

FEWEEK



Ofqual responds

In response to this long letter, Sally Collier, Chief Regulator, Ofqual, said was: “The wide range of young people and adults taking vocational, technical or other general qualifications to progress to further or higher education can be reassured that they will not be disadvantaged against their peers taking GCSEs or A levels – and that results will be issued fairly and in time for them to move on as planned.”

The focus seems to be on “students taking qualifications, alongside or instead of GCSEs, AS and A levels” as well as Functional Skills quals

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/awarding-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-this-summer>

FEWEEK



Ofqual responds

In response, Sally Collier, Chief Regulator, Ofqual, said was: “The wide range of young people and adults taking vocational, technical or other general qualifications to progress to further or higher education can be reassured that they will not be disadvantaged against their peers taking GCSEs or A levels – and that results will be issued fairly and in time for them to move on as planned.”

The focus seems to be on “students taking qualifications, alongside or instead of GCSEs, AS and A levels” as well as Functional Skills qualifications

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/awarding-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-this-summer>

FEWEEK

Quals to have a calculated result

“Some qualifications are usually taken alongside or instead of GCSEs, AS and A levels, and are principally used for progression to further or higher education. This group includes, for example, many BTEC Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, and UAL Diplomas as well as general qualifications such as the International Baccalaureate, Cambridge Pre-U and qualifications included under the umbrella term ‘Core Maths’. It also includes Functional Skills qualifications. 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, and could include some learners being assessed on modules in the first year of a two-year course”

Summer 2020 results for vocational, technical and other qualifications

Advice for teachers, trainers and tutors; learners, parents and carers; employers and professional bodies on vocational and technical qualifications, and general qualifications other than GCSEs, AS and A levels, Extended Project Qualifications and Advanced Extension Award in maths

ofqual

FE WEEK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

How to calculate a grade

“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 centre assessment result will be based on a range of evidence held by the school, college or training provider. Depending on the structure of the qualification, centres may be asked to provide a centre assessment result 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).”

Summer 2020 results for vocational, technical and other qualifications

Advice for teachers, trainers and tutors; learners, parents and carers; employers and professional bodies on vocational and technical qualifications, and general qualifications other than GCSEs, AS and A levels, Extended Project Qualifications and Advanced Extension Award in maths

ofqual

FE WEEK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

Expectations on the awarding org

“The awarding organisation offering the qualification will use any centre assessed result, 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. Where appropriate, statistical techniques based on students’ results in previous years, on these and on their academic qualifications, will form part of the adopted approach. We are working with awarding organisations to develop the principles of the approach - such that in the same circumstances, the same approach to calculating results would be used - and that it is deliverable for everyone involved.”

Summer 2020 results for vocational, technical and other qualifications

Advice for teachers, trainers and tutors; learners, parents and carers; employers and professional bodies on vocational and technical qualifications, and general qualifications other than GCSEs, AS and A levels, Extended Project Qualifications and Advanced Extension Award in maths

ofqual

FE WEEK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

What next?

“We are working with awarding organisations to finalise a list of qualifications that we will advise the Secretary of State should be in scope for learners to receive a calculated result. Awarding organisations 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.”

Summer 2020 results for vocational, technical and other qualifications

Advice for teachers, trainers and tutors; learners, parents and carers; employers and professional bodies on vocational and technical qualifications, and general qualifications other than GCSEs, AS and A levels, Extended Project Qualifications and Advanced Extension Award in maths

ofqual

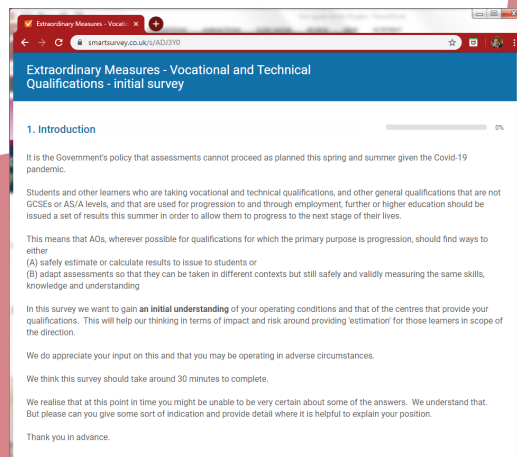
FE WEEK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

Ofqual snap Awarding Org survey

Ofqual looking for “an initial understanding of your operating conditions and that of the centres that provider your qualifications” with completion by tomorrow lunchtime!!

Questions include: “Do you think you could 'generate' 'estimated grades' (or 'calculated grades') for learners based on *banked* component data?”



FE WEEK

Some questions FE Week has asked Ofqual and DfE

- 1. What deadline has Ofqual been set for supplying the list of qualifications they think should be part of their extraordinary regulatory framework?**
- 2. When will the list of qualifications be published?**
- 3. Would learners need to already be registered with the awarding organisation before 1 March, or before what date?**
- 4. For pass or fail qualifications, like FS, how is it possible to rank or moderate?**

Ofqual say they won't be publishing the slides they used to brief AOs, won't say if they have been set a deadline and say more detail will come “after Easter”...

FE WEEK