

Centre Guidance on the Centre Assessment Grades process for summer 2020

Version 1.0

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Note: As the situation develops, we may need to update this document. Please always access this document directly from the OCR website rather than saved digital or printed copies.

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1. Introduction

OCR Life and Living Skills and OCR Entry Level Using ICT Qualifications are within the scope of Ofqual's Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQ) extraordinary regulatory framework for summer 2020. It is government policy that candidates due to take assessments for some qualifications before the end of the summer should receive a **calculated result** rather than an adapted or postponed assessment where there is sufficient evidence to support this. We have concluded that this is the best approach for these qualifications.

So that as many candidates as possible can receive a result in summer 2020, the process needs to provide a safe and valid outcome which reflects the unit result that the candidate is likely to have received if they had been able to complete the assessment.

This OCR centre guidance provides clarification on the process you will need to follow and involves you considering any relevant evidence and providing centre assessment grades for units for eligible candidates. We will then check these submissions.

This guidance is intended to help you to:

- determine who you should submit centre assessment grades for; and
- make decisions about the grades to submit.

We recognise that this is a challenging process for everyone. We need to work together to minimise the number of candidates whose progress is delayed. However, this must not be at the expense of the integrity and validity of these results or previous and future results. We need you to help us achieve this through the centre assessment grades process.

We need to make sure that end users value these results as equivalent to those achieved at any other time. So, they need to be realistic and based on sufficient evidence and the numbers achieving outcomes need to stand up to scrutiny in the context of historical performance. We have a regulatory obligation to check overall outcomes for these qualifications against previous years. We will therefore check each centre's submissions against historic data for the centre, both in terms of past achievement rates and numbers completing assessments. If your centre does not have any historical data, then we may need additional evidence and we will contact you if this is the case.

No one wants their progress to be delayed. However, it is not in the best interests of candidates to be awarded results indicating that they can function at a level they will not be able to demonstrate to at least a reasonable extent.

Key terms:

Assessment - refers to the internal assessment relevant to the unit.

Calculated result - the final outcome issued for a candidate by OCR.

Centre assessment grade - the teacher/assessors' professional judgment of the unit grade a candidate would most likely have achieved this summer if learning had continued as normal. These are the grades you submit to us.

Protected characteristics - are defined by the 2010 Equality Act as, age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

2. Scope

a) Qualifications

This guidance covers centre assessment grades for units from the following qualifications.

Qualification titles	OCR entry code
Entry Level 1 Life and Living Skills Qualifications:	
OCR Entry Level Introductory Award in Life and Living Skills (Entry 1)	10160
OCR Entry Level Award in Life and Living Skills (Entry 1)	10161
OCR Entry Level Extended Award in Life and Living Skills (Entry 1)	10162
OCR Entry Level Certificate in Life and Living Skills (Entry 1)	10163
OCR Entry Level Extended Certificate in Life and Living Skills (Entry 1)	10181
OCR Entry Level Diploma in Life and Living Skills (Entry 1)	10164
Entry Level 2 Life and Living Skills Qualifications:	
OCR Entry Level Introductory Award in Life and Living Skills (Entry 2)	10165
OCR Entry Level Award in Life and Living Skills (Entry 2)	10166
OCR Entry Level Certificate in Life and Living Skills (Entry 2)	10167
OCR Entry Level Extended Certificate in Life and Living Skills (Entry 2)	10182
OCR Entry Level Diploma in Life and Living Skills (Entry 2)	10168
Entry Level 3 Life and Living Skills Qualifications:	
OCR Entry Level Introductory Award in Life and Living Skills (Entry 3)	10169
OCR Entry Level Award in Life and Living Skills (Entry 3)	10170
OCR Entry Level Certificate in Life and Living Skills (Entry 3)	10171
OCR Entry Level Extended Certificate in Life and Living Skills (Entry 3)	10183
OCR Entry Level Diploma in Life and Living Skills (Entry 3)	10172
Entry Level Award in Using ICT (Entry 3)	01679

b) Eligible candidates

Centres should submit unit centre assessment grades for all candidates **who they would expect to have taken assessment(s) between 20 March and 31 July**. This includes:

- candidates attempting the assessment for the first time
- candidates retaking the assessment
- candidates who have completed units, but the claim has not been submitted to OCR.

Centres must **not** submit centre assessment grades for any units their candidates did **not** expect to complete during this period.

Where any candidates have completed assessments **since 20 March 2020**:

- If you have submitted claims to OCR, then these need to be processed before any candidates involved can be considered for unit centre assessment grades. If you have outstanding claims, contact us to check their progress before you complete and submit your grades.

- If assessment has been completed but not claimed/submitted to OCR, centres should use the completed assessment as part of their evidence in judging a grade for the candidates in question (rather than trying to complete the assessment process in the usual way) and include these candidates in their unit centre assessment grades submission to OCR.

c) Terms governing the centre assessment grade process

The following terms governing this process:

1. This is a one-off, time-limited process offered to minimise disruption caused by measures taken by government in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. The aim is that, as far as possible, candidates due to take assessments during this period are not disadvantaged.
2. Centres are only allowed to make **one** submission for all levels and sizes of Life and Living Skills and **one** submission for Entry Level Using ICT. This must cover all eligible candidates expected to take assessments between 20 March and 31 July 2020 or had completed assessment work prior to this and this work still needs to be claimed.
3. Once a centre has made a submission, OCR will not consider any subsequent submissions by that centre (except if OCR requests this to resolve issues).
4. Once final calculated results have been approved by OCR, there will be no right of appeal by the centre or candidate against the **result**. An appeal based on whether the **process** was followed will be offered.
5. We reserve the right to review evidence used by centres to reach judgments about centre assessment grades on request. This will take place as part of quality assurance of the centre's submission or through other quality assurance activity at a later point.
6. As part of quality assurance of a centre's submission, we will not take action to change or adjust grades for any candidate, but we may ask the centre to reconsider its submitted grades if we have any concerns.
7. We will support centres in resolving quality assurance concerns (see section 5) about their submission. However, we will **reject** all of the submission if these cannot be resolved.
8. It is expected that for various reasons related to the current situation some centres may not be able to participate. For example:
 - centres with furloughed staff
 - centres who are operating at the limits of their capacity, for example, healthcare providers.

In such cases, we will make every effort to minimise any disadvantage. However, delaying assessment until a later time may be the only option.
9. Centre assessment grades must remain confidential. Centre staff must not release them to candidates (or their parents/carers) before the issue of results by OCR. Incidents of results being released will be investigated as suspected malpractice. Centres should refer to [JCQ Guidance on malpractice for summer awarding 2020](#).

d) Timelines

For all centres	
29 June – 17 July	Centre assessment grades produced and submitted by centres
July – early August	Processing, resolution of issues, results calculation
By 20 August	Results release

For centres in Northern Ireland, an additional opportunity to submit centre assessment grades will be made available in August, dates to be confirmed.

3. The centre assessment grades process

The aim of this process is to enable as many candidates as possible who would have been expecting unit and/or qualification results for the Life and Living Skills and/or the Entry Level Using ICT qualifications this summer to be awarded a result.

a) Before judging centre assessment grades

To be involved in the assessment process you must be familiar with:

- this guidance on the process.
- the assessment criteria and learning outcomes for the units and qualification(s) being assessed.
- [Ofqual Guidance for Heads of Centre, Heads of Department and Teachers on objectivity in grading and ranking](#)

You should only judge a candidate's grade for candidates that you have some experience of teaching the subject and/or unit.

b) Judging candidates' centre assessment grades

For all units, you must:

- identify eligible candidates
- consider an evidence-based judgment for each eligible candidate.

It is vital that you carefully consider the strength and reliability of evidence that you have so that centre assessment grades are appropriate. If you do not have enough evidence to make valid judgments, you should not propose assessment grades in these circumstances. You should only submit grades for those candidates where there is **at least one valid piece of evidence** available (see Section 3c).

For each candidate whose assessment grade for a unit is being judged, you should consider:

- the assessment requirements of the unit
- all of the evidence available that demonstrates the candidate's ability and progress towards the assessment requirements of the unit

- your knowledge of the candidate's ability
- any permitted support that would have been given to that candidate in completing the assessment
- any access arrangements and/or reasonable adjustments that would have been made to the assessment for that candidate in respect of a specific need or disability
- the level of confidence you have in the candidate's ability to perform the assessment criteria at the expected level.

For those candidates that have not taken a scheduled assessment, using your professional expertise, you must reach a considered judgment about whether that candidate would have passed the unit if their learning and progression had not been disrupted and they had taken the assessment in the usual way. We acknowledge that in some cases the evidence used may only show partial achievement of the unit's requirements, given the disruption to the scheduled programme of learning.

You should bear in mind the candidate's progression aim when judging an achievement, in relation to the required skills. The candidate would be able to:

- progress to the next qualification level or
- demonstrate the skill safely/adequately in an everyday setting.

In some cases, you may consider that a candidate would have been on the borderline between passing and failing the assessment. Where it is difficult to reach a definitive judgment, we recommend that you:

- discuss this as part of standardisation (see section 3d)
- use the assessment criteria, this guidance and any relevant supporting documentation, for example the assignments
- compare the evidence for that candidate with other candidates felt to be around the borderline but where it was possible to reach a decision on whether they would pass or not.

We also recommend that you record borderline decisions. These can then be reconsidered when the centre checks the overall profile of the centre assessment grades for the unit against previous performance.

For each candidate in the submission, we will require you to:

- indicate the types of evidence you have used to base your judgment
- confirm that the evidence used to make judgments for each unit is valid.

You **do not** need to submit the evidence of candidate work used in your decision-making along with your centre assessment grades. However, we may request it during the quality assurance process.

If you have had unit results issued in the past you must confirm that you have considered historic achievement rates and past centre performance in arriving at your submitted centre assessment grades. You will need to account for any variations in what you are proposing for summer 2020 compared to this past performance.

When centre assessment grades have been judged for all eligible candidates within your centre, the following should be retained for each submission:

- total number of candidates for whom a unit has been claimed
- the types of evidence used for each submission to support the process

- if the centre assessment grades have been standardised (where applicable).

We may need to see the evidence and records used to support judgment of unit centre assessment grades. Evidence must be kept for a **minimum of six months** after the release of results.

Records of candidate enrolment, attendance records and records of which units a candidate intended to take and when a candidate intended to complete their study programme should also be kept for six months after the release of results.

c) Evidence

For each candidate, you need to consider all available valid evidence which demonstrates the candidate's progress towards the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the unit and supports a judgment about whether the candidate would pass the unit or not.

We recommend that the minimum evidence requirements are exceeded and that there is more than one source of evidence used to support the judgment for each candidate, especially when judging that a candidate has passed.

The following are considered to be the valid forms of evidence that should be used to support judgments, where these are available:

- A. Units already awarded to the candidate.
- B. Centre-marked attempts at the live/practice assessments.
- C. Formative assessment results. Formative assessment is defined as assessment undertaken to check learning has taken place and assess progress towards the required level.
- D. Any other work which the candidate has completed towards the qualification (such as work they have done in class or at home independently).
- E. Candidate work demonstrating the skills needed for relevant units that has been completed in support of another qualification.

Evidence types A-E cover all the potential types of candidate evidence which can be used to support assessments.

d) Standardisation

At the start of the process, you should consider an initial sample of candidates and make provisional judgments about whether each would pass or not. Any candidates who are felt to be on the borderline of 'pass' should be noted. Before judging any further centre assessment grades, you should collaborate to discuss and compare these assessments, the evidence used, and the judgment applied so that you can agree on your decisions.

As a result of this process, you may want to revisit judgments reached about the initial sample of candidates. You could also consider the historical achievement rates and past centre performance in order to support your judgment.

You should then complete judgments for all candidates. You may wish to continue to discuss any borderline decisions with colleagues.

Where there is more than one teacher responsible for teaching a unit at a particular level, you should work together to standardise your judgment about the candidate's centre assessment grade.

Additionally, if you are making the grade decisions for a unit, it would be good practice for you to ask a suitable colleague to sense-check your decision making as part of the centre's internal process. This helps to check consistency of approach and minimise any risk of unconscious bias.

You must record standardisation discussions/decisions. The centre must keep records and evidence used in the process of determining centre assessment grades, including any involving standardisation discussions.

e) Equalities, reasonable adjustments and reducing the risk of bias

Judgments must be made in an impartial, balanced and unbiased way. The centre assessment grades must be based on evidence of each candidate's expected likely level of attainment.

Every effort must be made to ensure that vulnerable candidates or those with special educational needs or protected characteristics are not disadvantaged.

Candidates must not be systematically advantaged or disadvantaged by the centre assessment grades process due to any factor that does not relate to their knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject (for example their behaviour, character, appearance, social background or any specific needs).

Conflicts of Interest (COI) must also be managed within the centre to ensure judgments are fair and unbiased.

In normal circumstances, any reasonable adjustment or access arrangement agreed for a candidate is realised through:

- the conditions in which the assessment is taken
- support allowed during the assessment.

Without live assessment in its usual sense this summer, it is vital that consideration is given to how these factors would have influenced the likely outcome for eligible candidates as part of their centre assessment grades process and keep a record of this.

4. Role of the Head of Centre

The Head of Centre must sign off all of the unit centre assessment grades submitted by their centre for all relevant qualifications. This is in the form of a declaration confirming that the process has been followed in full and confirm that the centre assessment grades process has been carried out as detailed in this guidance.

The Head of Centre is responsible for making sure:

- centre assessment grades have been submitted only for units where candidates expected to have completed or been awarded between 20 March to 31 July 2020
- centre assessment grades have not been submitted for units that have already been claimed and are awaiting a result to be issued

- teachers with sufficient knowledge of the candidates have judged that candidate's grade
- all staff who are judging grades are briefed and familiar with the process and requirements as outlined in this document and associated materials to support the process (see section 3)
- centre assessment grades are only submitted for a unit where there is valid evidence on which to base the judgment
- that teacher judgment takes into account any access arrangements and reasonable adjustments that would be made to the assessment where a candidate would have been entitled to these in the normal course of assessment
- that judgments are evidence-based and free of any bias in respect of any candidate with a protected characteristic or any other factor (for example character, appearance, social background or special educational needs) that does not relate to their knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject
- that where more than one member of staff is involved in teaching an individual candidate for any unit, that these members of staff work together to standardise their judgments and approach in relation to the assessment
- that a check comparing the numbers of pass grades for each unit with expectations about how each cohort of candidates would normally perform has taken place and any factors which account for any divergence between numbers taking assessments at the centre historically and the number of centre assessment grades being submitting is considered.

Once the process has been completed, the Head of Centre must complete a declaration and approve a single submission of centre assessment grades covering all candidates whose assessments they plan to submit, including all units and levels.

Checking the submission

This process covers any Life and Living Skills and Using ICT Entry Level assessments which would have taken place between 20 March 2020 and 31 July 2020 or which have not already been submitted for certification.

As part of a final check before submitting centre assessment grades to OCR, the Head of Centre must oversee a comparison between the proposed summer 2020 submissions and previous centre activity. This means a comparison between the number of results submitted for each unit for an equivalent historic period (e.g. 20 March 2019 – 31 July 2019). Approximate figures may be used where it is not possible to generate exact figures.

Any variance for any unit should be noted and explained as part of the submission. If the centre does not have any historical data, then OCR may contact the centre to request additional evidence.

5. Quality assurance of centre assessment grades

When you submit your centre assessment grades to OCR for consideration, you will provide us with:

- your grades for eligible candidates by unit, as detailed in this document
- an indication of the types of evidence upon which you based your judgments for candidates

- confirmation that historic achievement rates and past centre performance have been considered in arriving at your assessment grades, and that any variations in what you are proposing for summer 2020 through the centre assessment grades process are justified.

We will review your submission to decide if the proposed assessment grades look reasonable against our records of what has happened previously. We will check the overview of the candidate evidence used and any supporting information about how the centre assessment grades decisions were made.

We will review the centre assessment grades against data such as:

- the number of assessments submitted for each unit for an equivalent historic period (e.g. 20 March 2019 – 31 July 2019) and
- the number of candidate achievements for an equivalent historic period (e.g. 20 March 2019 – 31 July 2019).

Where a submission shows that the guidance has been followed; there is valid evidence upon which judgments have been based and grades look reasonable in the context of historic performance, the submission will generally be accepted in good faith.

If we have concerns, we may ask for more information or ask you to review your submission. You will have an opportunity to review and revise the submission or to provide additional justification for it. We may ask for some or all of the candidate evidence as part of this process. If you cannot provide evidence when requested, this may also be investigated as suspected malpractice and may result in sanctions or penalties against the centre and/or individuals. We follow the process of investigation outlined in the JCQ *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures 2019/20*.

Centres should also refer to [JCQ Guidance on malpractice for summer awarding 2020](#) which provides further guidance on issues that are likely to result in a suspected malpractice investigation.

Ultimately, where proposed centre assessment grades are not felt to be justifiable, we may reject some or all of those proposed. In these circumstances, you will have access to an appeals process about the procedures we have followed. Where candidates affected have not been able to be issued with the result they require to progress, they will have the opportunity to undertake live assessment in the autumn.