



Prince's Trust

QUALIFICATIONS

Approach to Awarding and Teacher Assessed Grades

Employment, Teamwork and Community Skills

April 2021

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Executive summary

This document sets out The Prince's Trust's approach to assessment and awarding for the remainder of the 2020-21 academic year. This guide is primarily for centres taking the Employment, Teamwork and Community Skills (ETC) qualifications in England and Northern Ireland.

Introduction

Since the Spring of 2020, the Coronavirus pandemic has caused substantial disruption to teaching, learning and assessment activity in all parts of the education sector. Throughout this time, we have done as much as we can to support centres in mitigating the impact of the pandemic on learners' attainment, certification and progression.

In Autumn 2020 the regulators, Ofqual in England, CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland and Qualifications Wales published the Extended Extraordinary Regulatory Framework (EERF). The EERF gave awarding organisations like us flexibility to adapt assessments to help mitigate the impact of the pandemic on centres and learners.

However, since then ongoing restrictions, public health measures and national lockdowns have meant that a new, broader framework and approach was needed to ensure learners were not disadvantaged.

This resulted in a further consultation and in February 2021, Ofqual on behalf of the other regulators (CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland and Qualifications Wales) published the outcome of this consultation. This confirmed that qualifications such as ours, those important for progression to further study, higher education, or employment, should continue remotely, or in person, in line with public health measures. However, where assessments cannot take place on public health grounds or remotely, then these can be awarded through a Teacher Assessed Grade. This is all set out in a new regulatory framework, The Vocational and Technical Qualifications Contingency Regulatory Framework (The VCRF).

Key points from this framework include:

- ➔ Performance standards for vocational and technical qualifications should be broadly the same as in previous years in order to maintain standards.
- ➔ Learners eligible for Teacher Assessed Grades, where applicable, are defined as those expecting to complete an assessment between 01 August 2020 and 31 August 2021.
- ➔ Awarding organisations should be afforded flexibility in how they determine their approach to teacher assessed grading and their conditions for minimum evidence requirements.

Our approach

Throughout this academic year, we have looked to do everything we can to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on centres and your learners. We appreciate that the pandemic has caused acute, unprecedented challenges for you and want to do everything we can to help.

The Trust is committed to working with centres to ensure all learners get the qualification they need and deserve in 2021.

- ➔ We remain dedicated to supporting learning and progression and maintaining the rigour and robustness of our qualifications.

- ➔ We appreciate that centres and staff are working in acute circumstances to support learners so we will make our awarding arrangements as simple as possible and provide you with exceptional guidance and customer service.
- ➔ We will continue to work in partnership for the benefit of learners. The current context demands that partners across the sector work proactively and effectively together in support of centres and learners; we've done that throughout by working with other awarding organisations and The Regulators to consider suitable adaptations.

These points have shaped the changes we made to our qualifications, assessments and operational processes in the Autumn and the further adaptations and new arrangements described in this document. **In summary, units should continue to be delivered and assessed wherever possible, using flexibilities and adaptations confirmed in the Autumn with Teacher Assessed Grades offered only where assessments cannot be completed.** Any Teacher Assessed Grade claimed should reflect each learner's current level of performance for that assessment, demonstrated through the collation of evidence in line with the guidance in this document.

It is important to note, that the approach we take at The Trust may be slightly different to that of other awarding organisations. It is not possible to adopt a one size fits all approach to assessment and awarding through the remainder of the academic year given the substantial differences which exist between GCSEs and A Levels and vocational and technical qualifications, but the principles that guide the approaches taken will be the same.

What is a Teacher Assessed Grade?

A Teacher Assessed Grade is a formal judgement of learner attainment against the requirements of a given assessment, offered by a centre where it has not been possible for the learner to complete the assessment that would usually be required. All units in the ETC qualification suite are graded 'pass' or 'fail'.

A Teacher Assessed Grade should:

- Be based on as much teaching, learning and assessment activity as possible.
- Only be offered where it is not possible for an assessment to be completed. e.g. because some criteria have not been completed.
- Represent a holistic view of learner attainment, offered by centres and teachers based on teaching, learning and assessment activity that has been completed.
- Be supported by evidence of learner attainment collated by learners, teachers and centres.

To ensure that Teacher Assessed Grades are accurate, valid and evidenced, centres must:

- ➔ **Continue with teaching and learning as far and for as long as possible in the remainder of the 2020-21 academic year, before formulating a Teacher Assessed Grade.**

How will Teacher Assessed Grades be awarded?

We will allow centres to collate and consider a wide variety of evidence and types of evidence, to support the Teacher Assessed Grades they offer to us. We understand that the pandemic has impacted different centres, qualifications and learners in different ways and that we need to offer an approach that enables centres to fairly reflect the different ways in which your learners have been impacted by the pandemic. With that in mind, we do not believe that it

is helpful or realistic for us to set strict, prescriptive evidence requirements: rather, we will empower centres and teachers.

Through our normal channels, we will conduct substantive external quality assurance on Teacher Assessed Grades to ensure consistency and compliance with the requirements we set out. In doing this, we may ask to see the process through which centres have determined grades and the evidence you have collated to underpin them.

All centres wishing to apply for a Teacher Assessed Grades must complete the Teacher Assessed Grade Form and make the corresponding entries on The Portal or The QualsHub at the same time.

How many credits can be awarded as Teacher Assessed Grade?

For ETC the following credits can be claimed as a TAG.

Award Sized Qualification	Certificate Sized Qualification
Up to 3 credits can be claimed as a Teacher Assessed Grade Before the overall qualification is awarded all other units will need to be completed in full and internally moderated. These will be subject to our usual External Moderation quality checks.	Up to 12 credits can be claimed as a Teacher Assessed Grade Before the overall qualification is awarded all other units will need to be completed in full and internally moderated. These will be subject to our usual External Moderation quality checks.

The units being claimed as a TAG should be at the same level of the qualification being claimed.

The number of units you claim as a TAG may vary between your learners in the same Team, depending on what they managed to achieve.

What are our evidence requirements for Teacher Assessed Grades?

Where it is not possible to produce additional evidence for some criteria in the timescales available, sufficient evidence can be drawn from different sources and evidence types from across the qualification as a whole, where applicable. Centres can use evidence from other assessments and map it to the required content if related. This allows an inference to be made about the learner's skills or knowledge for the unit in question.

Evidence may include, for example:

- ➔ Units already completed
- ➔ Evidence from Team Leader-conducted formative assessment activity
- ➔ Partially completed units

- ➔ Evidence from work experience/placements where relevant to the qualification
- ➔ Witness testimonies or Team Leader observation records

We are not asking for quantitative measures of coverage or Guided Learning Hours (GLH) as evidence.

Where an internal assessment is partially completed, the Assessor should make a judgement to confirm if the partially completed evidence is sufficient to evidence performance, and therefore enable them to submit a Teacher Assessed Grade. While there is no set requirement for the minimum amount of content that learners must have been taught, learners should have been taught sufficient content to allow a judgement to be made.

Assessors should take a holistic judgement of the evidence of the learner's performance on the content they have been taught and how this relates to the assessment criteria where the Teacher Assessed Grade is required. Look at the quality of the work you have collected and use the sources of support available to help you reach a final decision about the grade. This will include your professional experience of the units and your learner's performance.

Remember that the grade assigned must be based on learner's performance in the evidence you have collected. You should not factor in the learner's potential. For example, if they had been completing units at Entry 3, we would not expect them to be entered for TAGs at Level 2. It should be no easier or harder for a learner to achieve a qualification this year compared to previous years.

Ofqual have produced [guidance](#) on avoiding conscious or unconscious bias or discrimination which may support you in making a more objective judgement.

What if there is no evidence for one of the units being claimed?

You can still give a unit level Teacher Assessed Grade for a unit where there is no direct evidence, as long as you have some evidence from another unit or units in the qualification to show the learner has achieved at the required standard. There must be some actual concrete learner work (i.e., in a form that can be reviewed by others such as written work or audio/visual recordings), in order that sampling as a part of external quality assurance could take place if required.

Across the units many of the same skills are being developed but in different contexts, so where evidence of achievement has been demonstrated in one unit, this evidence could also be used to support evidence of performance in the other unit. For example, taking part in a Community Project or Supporting Other People in the Community involves working as a team, so evidence here could be used to claim Teamwork Skills.

If the learner has not completed any units **and** there is no evidence to represent a learner's personal development or employability skills, then the first action should be to prioritise delivering content and collect further evidence of learner attainment. It is not necessary for every aspect of assessment criteria within a unit to be assessed to arrive at a judgement that the learner would pass. The aim should be to include evidence that assesses the learner's ability across a reasonable range of criteria reflecting as many learning outcomes as possible.

How should centres prepare Teacher Assessed Grades?

Given the approach and requirements described above, we expect that centres will:

Review the situation of their learners to identify where a Teacher Assessed Grade may be required, as soon as possible. Centres should identify which units have already been completed and enter these if they have not already done so, which units are partially complete and which are yet to begin. Centres should identify any potential assessments where evidence may be lacking as soon as possible and make every effort to generate sufficient evidence in the time remaining, through continued teaching, learning and assessment.

Collate the evidence you need to meet the minimum requirements we have set out for a TAG where one is needed and ensure that your Head of Centre or equivalent has undertaken a high-level cross-check of the Teacher Assessed Grades against results for previous cohorts to ensure your TAGs overall are not overly lenient or harsh by comparison with those results from previous years.

Quality assurance of Teacher Assessed Grades

As centres will be aware, we already operate robust external quality assurance arrangements which help us ensure the robustness, fairness and validity of the qualifications we award. We will continue to operate our usual External Quality Assurance arrangements through the remainder of the current academic year.

<p>Step 1</p>	<p>If you wish to have units submitted as a TAG you must complete the Teacher Assessed Grade Form. This is a Microsoft form and can be accessed here.</p> <p>You must at the same time make your corresponding claims on The Portal or The QualsHub depending on which system your learners are registered on. Please only make claims for TAGs at the time of submitting the form; any fully completed units should be claimed at a different time.</p> <p>TAGs can be claimed any time between 6th April and 31st August 2021.</p>
<p>Step 2</p>	<p>Prince's Trust Qualifications will complete reviews of forms and units submitted by centres. As a result of these desk-based reviews, we may require further information or engagement with you before confirming learner results. As normal, we will reserve the right to conduct formal investigations where we are concerned about a given centre's practice and may hold results whilst we do so.</p> <p>We will support, advise and challenge centres on your approach to Teacher Assessed Grades and we will consider the plausibility of the TAGs requested and review centres' previous results profiles to ensure that entry patterns are consistent.</p> <p>The approach we take will be risk based, so we are less likely to call for evidence from established centres, with a good track record who have banked units of work with us. For new centres where we do not have a historic picture to refer to, we are more likely to engage in dialogue with you and call for evidence.</p>

	A report will only be produced by the Trust if we call for additional evidence from you to support your claims for TAGs or if we are unable to issue results.
Step 3	<p>EQA activity into the next academic year 2021-22</p> <p>Centres should retain the evidence you have collated to underpin each of the Teacher Assessed Grades for six months after the results are issued. This may include partially completed Tracking Sheets and any other quality assurance documentation you produce.</p> <p>As normal, where we identify concerns, we reserve the right to conduct formal investigations and to refuse or withdraw certifications if necessary.</p>

Results and appeals

Assuming there are no issues with the claims made and the TAG form submitted, we will issue results for TAGs within **three weeks** of the claims being made. If further information is required, we will contact the person who completed the form.

We have updated our Appeals Process, to be aligned with the new regulatory framework set out by Ofqual, to ensure that every learner has the right to appeal their Teacher Assessed Grade should they wish to.

The need for appeals should be limited as learners should be confident in their grades because centres will have:

- a high standard of internal quality assurance both in determining Teacher Assessed Grades based on learner evidence and ensuring that there are no administrative or procedural errors
- effective provision of reasonable adjustments and access arrangements for all eligible learners
- effective oversight and clear professional accountability from the Head of Centre who will oversee the information provided on the Microsoft Form and the claims subsequently made
- clear communication with learners regarding the appeals process which explains to learners the stages that an appeal must follow.

Sharing Teacher Assessed Grades with learners prior to results release

Centres should ensure learners are aware of their Teacher Assessed Grading approach and that learners understand what evidence is being used to determine the teacher assessed grade being submitted for them. Centres must also ensure learners are aware in advance of results release, of instances where no TAGs have been submitted for them, when they may have reasonably expected that one would have.

However, centres must not share with learners the overall qualification results with learners before confirmed results are released by The Prince's Trust.

Reasonable adjustments and equalities considerations

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, or other relevant staff within a centre, must ensure learners receive the reasonable adjustments or access arrangements for which they are eligible. This applies to any units which are completed in full or arrangements that are put in place to determine TAGs.

Special consideration

The arrangements introduced under the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework for alternative awarding arrangements are intended to mitigate the impact of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Therefore, special consideration is not intended for learners who have missed teaching and learning as a consequence of public health guidance.

Where a learner has received all teaching and learning for an assessment and units are being completed, but through a temporary illness, injury, or other event outside of their control, has been unable to complete an assessment, then they may be eligible for a special consideration.

The QualsHub and The Portal

As we work together to support learner assessment, certification and progression it is essential that we maintain up to date, accurate, learner level data. We would therefore be grateful if centres could ensure that they have gained Centre Approval on The QualsHub.

We understand that you may use either The Portal or The QualsHub when making entries for Teams that started in September/October 2020, but you should be using The QualsHub when making entries for learners in Teams that commenced from January 2021 onwards.

We recognise that running two systems concurrently can be confusing, so if you need any help or training with making claims, please let us know.

How to contact us

You can email us at qualifications@princes-trust.org.uk

Telephone/ Zoom/ MS Team calls can also be arranged.