

VOCATIONAL CONTINGENCY REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Centre guidance

Abstract

This document provides guidance about qualification awarding and certification processes for The Learning Machine Centres in 2021.



Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF) – Centre guidance

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Summary

The Learning Machine (TLM) is subject to Ofqual's regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering vocational and technical qualifications affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

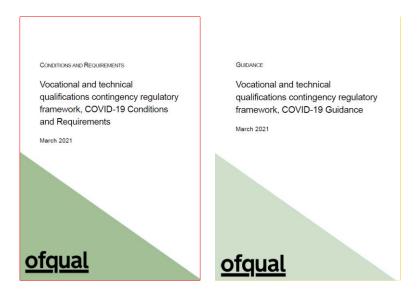
These requirements are set out in the Vocational and Technical Qualifications Contingency Regulatory Framework (the VCR Conditions). These conditions came into effect at 13:00 on 24 March 2021 for all vocational and technical qualifications which fall within categories A and B as defined in Condition VCR1.8.

The Framework also sets out Ofqual's requirements in relation to the following:

- the adaptation of Category A Qualifications and Category B Qualifications,
- the determination of results for Category B Qualifications, and
- the principles to be applied by awarding organisations when adapting Category A
 Qualifications and Category B Qualifications and when determining results for Category B
 Qualifications

This guidance sets out our approach and helps you through the grade determination and submission process in 2021. It is set out in 'Steps' that you can easily work through to hopefully, make the awarding process for our qualifications as simple as possible.

Ofqual has designed the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF): <u>Conditions and Requirements</u> and <u>Guidance</u>, deliberately to be flexible - allowing each awarding organisation to operate in the best way to deliver grades to its learners for its own qualifications.



For the avoidance of doubt, the VCRF overrides the previous framework (EERF) which will be removed and supersedes the ERF framework that covered assessments in the first COVID-19 closures.



Overall process summary

Step 1



Determine the type of qualifications offered by your Centre

Step 2





Evidence to be used decided upon – is it sufficient?



TAG can be judged against previous assessment standards



TAG based on individual Learner's actual level of attainment based on appropriate evidence

Step 3



Appropriate controls, adjustments & considerations in place – internal quality assurance

Step 4



Internal quality assurance – 'high level sign-off'



Appropriate Centre quality assurance in place

Step 5



Teacher assessed grades submitted to TLM

Step 6



TLM external quality assurance in place

Step 7



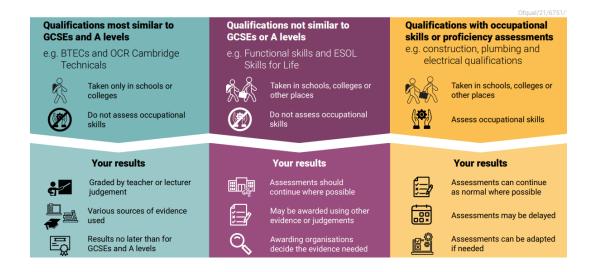
Awarding and certification



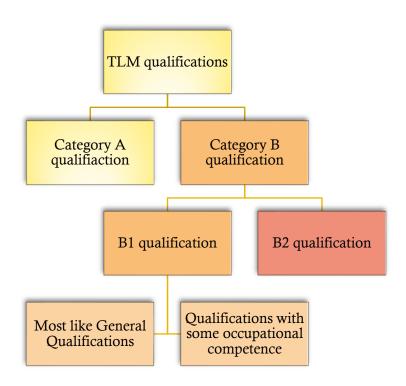
1. Determining the type of qualifications that you offer

How vocational and technical qualifications will be awarded in 2021





The spreadsheet supplied by TLM will enable you to determine qualification type:





Category A qualifications

Category A are Qualifications which assess occupational or professional competency, proficiency, or act as a licence to practise, where it would not be safe to award these qualifications using alternative evidence:

Qualification Title	Qualification Number
TLM Level 1 Award in Musical Performance - Grade 1	603/4575/5
TLM Level 1 Award in Musical Performance - Grade 2	603/4576/7
TLM Level 1 Award in Musical Performance - Grade 3	603/4577/9
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Musical Performance - Grade 4	603/4578/0
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Musical Performance - Grade 5	603/4579/2
TLM Level 3 Diploma in Musical Performance - Grade 6	603/4580/9
TLM Level 3 Diploma in Musical Performance - Grade 7	603/4581/0
TLM Level 3 Diploma in Musical Performance - Grade 8	603/4582/2
TLM Level 3 Award in Hydraulic Lorry Loader Operations	603/6689/8
TLM Level 3 Award in Forklift Truck Operations	603/6690/4
TLM Level 3 Award in All Terrain Telescopic Handlers Operations	603/6691/6
TLM Level 3 Award in Moffett Mounted Forklift Trucks Operations	603/6934/6
TLM Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work	603/6935/8
TLM Level 3 Award in First Aid at Work	603/6936/X

It is not appropriate to Adapt these qualifications because we have carefully considered potential Adaptations to assessment requirements and delivery and we feel that they would undermine the Validity and Reliability of the qualifications. Also, there are methods of assessment/delivery that can be conducted without risks – and without the need for Adaptions.

For these qualifications, as far as possible, TLM will continue to make exams and other assessments available to learners, remotely or in person where it is safe to do so.

Please contact TLM if you wish to talk through arrangements for these qualifications.



Category B1 qualifications
These qualifications can be thought of as belonging to one of two groups:

Category		Description	Proposed certificate plan
Category B1	Most like General Qualifications	Qualifications which are used for progression to further or higher study or into employment, where the issuing of results to learners should be prioritised. It would include those qualifications most similar to GCSEs, AS and A levels.	TLM to award results in a similar way to GCSE, AS and A Levels. TLM to issue results using alternative evidence when exams and/or internal assessments do not take place, and/or when learners cannot access the assessments. Ofqual's expectation is that Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) should be used to award these qualifications that are primarily taught alongside or instead of GCSEs, AS and A Levels.
	Qualifications with some occupational competence	Some Tech Awards, Tech Levels and other vocationally related qualifications are also used for progression to further study or employment and so require the assessment of occupational skills or experience.	Aspects of the qualification which require the assessment of skills or experience will continue. Other areas will be awarded in line with the Most like GCSE, AS and A Level group.

They are as follows:

Qualification Title	Qualification Number		
TLM Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills in Open Systems and	500/8073/8		
Enterprise (ITQ)			
TLM Level 1 Certificate in IT User Skills in Open Systems and	500/8080/5		
Enterprise (ITQ)			
TLM Level 2 Award in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise	500/9888/3		
(ITQ)			

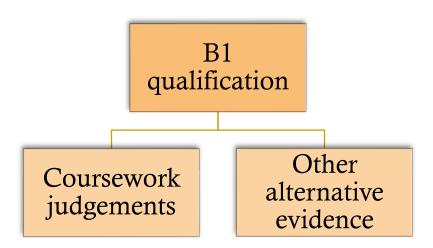


TLM Level 2 Diploma in ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	501/0033/6
TLM Entry Level Award in ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	501/0257/6
(Entry 3) TLM Entry Level Award in ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	501/0270/9
(Entry 2)	501/02/0/9
TLM Entry Level Award in ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	501/0271/0
(Entry 1)	501 /0425 / 4
TLM Level 2 Extended Certificate in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	501/0435/4
TLM Level 1 Award in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise	501/1428/1
(ITQ)	400 44 = 0 40
TLM Level 3 Award in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	600/1778/8
TLM Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering	600/4334/9
TLM Level 2 Certificate for IT User Skills in Open Systems and	600/6688/X
Enterprise	
TLM Entry Level Certificate In ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ) (Entry 3)	601/0988/9
TLM Level 1 Certificate in Open Systems Computing	601/1110/0
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Open Systems Computing	601/1111/2
TLM Level 1 Certificate in Designing, Engineering and Constructing a	601/1198/7
Sustainable Built Environment	
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Designing, Engineering, and Constructing a Sustainable Built Environment	601/1199/9
TLM Level 3 Award for Designing, Engineering and Constructing a	601/1496/4
Sustainable Built Environment	
TLM Level 3 Diploma for Designing, Engineering and Constructing a Sustainable Built Environment	601/1562/2
TLM Level 3 Certificate for Designing, Engineering and Constructing a	601/1563/4
Sustainable Built Environment	2017 12007 1
TLM Level 1 Award in Additive Manufacturing (3D Printing)	601/2711/9
TLM Level 2 Award In Additive Manufacturing (3D printing)	601/2780/6
TLM Level 3 Award in Additive Manufacturing (3D printing)	601/2802/1
TLM Entry Level Award in IT User Skills (ITQ) (Entry 2)	601/3381/8
TLM Level 2 Certificate In Open Systems IT Management	601/4276/5
TLM Level 1 Certificate In Smart Product Design and Manufacture	601/4557/2
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Smart Product Design and Manufacture	601/4558/4
TLM Level 1 Certificate In Open Systems and Enterprise	601/4559/6
TLM Level 3 Certificate in User Skills in Cloud Systems and Services	601/8775/X
(ITQ)	001/0/13/A
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Open Systems and Advanced Manufacturing Technologies	603/0146/6
TLM Level 3 Diploma in User Skills in Cloud Systems and Services	603/1123/X
(ITQ) TLM Level 2 Certificate in Open Platforms and Digital Skills	603/1204/X
TLM Level 3 Certificate for Digital Professional Expert	603/1386/9
TLM Level 3 Diploma for Digital Professional Expert	603/1387/0



TLM Level 2 Certificate in Cyber Security and Digital Forensics	603/1452/7
TLM Level 2 Certificate in User Skills and Digital Technologies	603/2817/4
TLM Level 1 Certificate in Open Systems and Advanced Manufacturing Technologies	603/2970/1
TLM Level 1 Diploma in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	603/4033/2

We have considered these qualifications and believe that as a guide, Coursework can be used as alternative evidence for some of them, and for the rest other alternative evidence can be used to determine grades.





Coursework judgements
Qualifications where Coursework judgements can under most circumstances, safely be made:

Qualification Title	Qualification Number
TLM Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills in Open Systems and	500/8073/8
Enterprise (ITQ) TLM Level 1 Certificate in IT User Skills in Open Systems and	500/8080/5
Enterprise (ITQ)	3007 80807 3
TLM Level 2 Award in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise	500/9888/3
(ITQ)	501 /0257 //
TLM Entry Level Award in ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ) (Entry 3)	501/0257/6
TLM Entry Level Award in ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	501/0270/9
(Entry 2)	
TLM Entry Level Award in ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ) (Entry 1)	501/0271/0
TLM Level 2 Extended Certificate in IT User Skills in Open Systems	501/0435/4
and Enterprise (ITQ)	2017 01027 1
TLM Level 1 Award in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise	501/1428/1
(ITQ) TLM Level 3 Award in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise	600/1778/8
(ITO)	600/1//8/8
TLM Level 2 Certificate for IT User Skills in Open Systems and	600/6688/X
Enterprise	
TLM Entry Level Certificate In ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ) (Entry 3)	601/0988/9
TLM Level 1 Certificate in Designing, Engineering and Constructing a	601/1198/7
Sustainable Built Environment	001/11/01/
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Designing, Engineering, and Constructing a	601/1199/9
Sustainable Built Environment TLM Level 3 Award for Designing, Engineering and Constructing a	601/1496/4
Sustainable Built Environment	0017 14907 4
TLM Level 3 Diploma for Designing, Engineering and Constructing a	601/1562/2
Sustainable Built Environment	
TLM Level 3 Certificate for Designing, Engineering and Constructing a Sustainable Built Environment	601/1563/4
TLM Entry Level Award in IT User Skills (ITQ) (Entry 2)	601/3381/8
TLM Level 1 Certificate In Open Systems and Enterprise	601/4559/6
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Open Systems and Advanced Manufacturing	603/0146/6
Technologies	003/0140/0
TLM Level 1 Certificate in Open Systems and Advanced Manufacturing	603/2970/1
Technologies	



Alternative evidence Qualifications where alternative evidence can be used:

Qualification Title	Qualification Number		
TLM Level 2 Diploma in ICT Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	501/0033/6		
TLM Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering	600/4334/9		
TLM Level 1 Certificate in Open Systems Computing	601/1110/0		
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Open Systems Computing	601/1111/2		
TLM Level 1 Award in Additive Manufacturing (3D Printing)	601/2711/9		
TLM Level 2 Award In Additive Manufacturing (3D printing)	601/2780/6		
TLM Level 3 Award in Additive Manufacturing (3D printing)	601/2802/1		
TLM Level 2 Certificate In Open Systems IT Management	601/4276/5		
TLM Level 1 Certificate In Smart Product Design and Manufacture	601/4557/2		
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Smart Product Design and Manufacture	601/4558/4		
TLM Level 3 Certificate in User Skills in Cloud Systems and Services (ITO)	601/8775/X		
TLM Level 3 Diploma in User Skills in Cloud Systems and Services (ITO)	603/1123/X		
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Open Platforms and Digital Skills	603/1204/X		
TLM Level 3 Certificate for Digital Professional Expert	603/1386/9		
TLM Level 3 Diploma for Digital Professional Expert	603/1387/0		
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Cyber Security and Digital Forensics	603/1452/7		
TLM Level 2 Certificate in User Skills and Digital Technologies	603/2817/4		
TLM Level 1 Diploma in IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise (ITQ)	603/4033/2		



Category B2 qualifications

Category	Description	Proposed certificate plan
Category B2 Used for progression	Qualifications which are important for progression to further or higher study or employment, but which are different from GCSEs, AS and A levels.	TLM will allow learner assessments to continue remotely or in person, where it is safe to do so. Where a learner is unable to access the remote or in person assessment on public health grounds, there will be eligibility to request Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). The minimum evidence and expectation around this will be decided at qualification level and you should wait further guidance for your specific qualification.

Qualification Title	Qualification Number	Assessment 20/21- exam	Assessment 20/21 - CW	
TLM Level 1 Essential Digital Skills	603/7076/2	X		
TLM Entry Level 3 Essential Digital Skills	603/7077/4	X		
TLM Level 1 Certificate in Skills for Employment	600/9056/X		X	
TLM Entry Level Certificate In Skills for Employment (Entry 3)	601/0045/X		X	
TLM Level 2 Certificate in Skills for Employment	601/0187/8		X	

Coursework

- TLM Level 1 Certificate in Skills for Employment
- TLM Entry Level Certificate In Skills for Employment (Entry 3)
- TLM Level 2 Certificate in Skills for Employment

Examination

- TLM Level 1 Essential Digital Skills
- TLM Entry Level 3 Essential Digital Skills

Please contact TLM if you wish to talk through arrangements for these qualifications.



2. Making decisions about evidence and its sufficiency

Evidence that can be considered to support Teacher assessed grades

- 1. Performance on any assessment for the qualification even if this has not been fully completed. Where relevant, we encourage Centres to support Learners to complete internal assessment as far as possible, and for you to mark those assessments.
- 2. Performance on any class or homework assessments and mock exams taken over the course of study.
- 3. Records of the Learner's performance over the course of study in the relevant qualification, including, for example, progress review data, classwork, and/or participation in practical activities, demonstrations, and performances.
- 4. Any other relevant evidence.

This may typically include:

- a) completed coursework,
- b) the outcome of already completed assessments,
- c) evidence from teacher-conducted formative assessment activity,
- d) evidence from centre-devised and/or sample assessment activity such as past papers,
- e) evidence from assessments set by TLM including e.g., controlled assessments,
- f) evidence from internal assessment activity, including synoptic assessments, and/or
- g) evidence from class and homework.

TLM will not issue alternative assessment tasks to replace cancelled external assessments.

We will <u>not accept</u> any of the following evidence to support Teacher assessed grades (TAGs):

- Learner performance on other, unrelated qualifications.
- Planned delivery set out in e.g., schemes of work.
- Guided learning hours completed.
- Content delivered.
- Attendance.

TLM require that the evidence which is used to support a TAG is retained by the Centre until 6-months after the date of the issue of the result, or the conclusion of any appeal in relation to that result, whichever is later.

The basis and process for appeals is set out on our website and detailed below.



Sufficiency of evidence

The evidence must be consistent to arrive at TAGs for Learners taking the same qualification, and sufficient to enable you to:

- 1. determine a TAG based on the standard set for the qualification in previous years in which assessments took place,
- 2. determine an individual Learner's actual level of attainment based on that evidence, and
- 3. be satisfied that the evidence you use can be authenticated as having been generated by the relevant Learner, and where appropriate, under any required conditions specified by TLM.

Evidence should be sufficient and enable you to make a realistic judgement of the standard of that work – normally this would be at least 50% of the evidence that a Learner would be anticipated as producing during a typical course of study for the qualification. This could be lower if a Centre has the evidence to support such an assertion, e.g., a range of supporting statistical evidence. Centres will have a good understanding of their Learners' performance and how it compares to other Learners within the qualification/Component this year, and in previous years.

That, in coming to this judgement for other qualifications in Category B where some assessments are continuing but some Learners are receiving a result through other arrangements (e.g., TAGs), expect that Learners have been taught all of the course of study and should demonstrate the range of knowledge, skills and understanding comparable to that expected for assessed work.

Centres should understand the importance of judgements being objective, and only take account of evidence relevant to Learner performance such that each Learner's TAG should be determined by the specific performance of that student in relation to the relevant qualification.

Where TAGs are used to determine results, TLM will expect its Centres to have regard to and draw on as appropriate Ofqual guidance titled 'Information for centres about making objective judgements'.





3. Controls, adjustments, and considerations

TLM will require that your Centre:

- 1. is consistent in the judgements that it uses to arrive at its TAGs for Learners taking the same qualification (e.g., through the provision of exemplification materials, or other support materials),
- 2. is consistent in the evidence that it uses to arrive at its TAGs for Learners taking the same qualification (e.g., through the provision of guidance by TLM on the evaluation of evidence),
- 3. is satisfied that the evidence it uses can be authenticated as having been generated by the relevant Learner, and where appropriate, under any required conditions specified by TLM,
- 4. in relation to any Learner who has been granted Special Consideration, takes that Special Consideration into account, and
- 5. in relation to any Learner who has an agreed Reasonable Adjustment, considers the impact on that Learner of any lack of that adjustment in producing any evidence which is used to inform the TAG for that Learner, and based on clear guidance supplied by TLM under Condition VCR6.1(a)(ii), is satisfied the evidence is sufficient to support a grade.



Purpose

This policy is aimed at our Centres and Learners who are undertaking or have completed, a TLM qualification. We are committed to not only complying with all current and relevant regulation and legislation to the development and delivery of our qualifications but surpassing in many areas. Our aim is to facilitate open access for all Learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments or special considerations in assessments, whilst ensuring the assessment of understanding, knowledge, skills and competence is not compromised in any way for all of the protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010. Please refer to our Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

This policy will also be used by our staff to ensure they are dealing with all reasonable adjustments and special considerations requests in a fair and consistent manner.

This policy outlines the following:

- Arrangements for making reasonable adjustments and special considerations in relation to the delivery and assessment of our qualifications
- How Learners qualify for reasonable adjustments and special considerations
- Reasonable adjustments we will accept and requests that are required prior to them
- being applied
 What special considerations can be granted for Learners.

Definition of a Reasonable Adjustment

A reasonable adjustment relates to any actions that help to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which may place the Learner at a disadvantage during the delivery of a qualification or an assessment situation. They are applied to an assessment process for a qualification to enable a Learner with a disability or difficulty to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required in the qualification specification.

When a reasonable adjustment has been applied, the work produced by the Learner will be marked to the same standards and assessment requirements as the work assessed of the other Learners.

TLM Accredited Qualifications - The Learning Machine, 4D & 4E Gagarin, Lichfield Road, Tamworth Staffordshire, B79 7GN T.1827 305940



4. Internal quality assurance

TLM require that your Centre has in place, and complies with, effective arrangements to quality assure its TAGs before submitting them to us. This must include:

- 1. a clear approach to making judgements in relation to each TAG, including how evidence will be used you may need to consider putting in place additional controls where a staff member might have a personal interest in a Learner (for example as a relative), and
- 2. a high-level cross-check of the TAGs against results for previous cohorts at the Centre who took assessments for the same qualification in previous years to provide an indication that TAGs overall are not overly lenient or harsh by comparison with those results from previous years.

TAGs must have been reviewed by both -

- a) subject Teachers or Assessors, and
- b) the relevant head of department or equivalent or, where there is no person in such a role, the head of Centre or equivalent a head of Centre declaration will be required (see Annex 1), and this must be approved by TLM prior to the submission of any TAGs. It is recommended that this is submitted as early as possible so that where any concerns arise, these can be discussed with you.

Whereas data from previous years can potentially provide a useful high-level cross check on overall grading patterns to ensure that objectivity is being maintained, each Learner's TAG should be determined by the specific performance of that student in relation to the relevant qualification.



5. Submission of Teacher assessed grades

Where TAGs will form the basis of a result, TLM will:

- 1. require Centres to provide a result in respect of each Category B Qualification (see Annex 2) or assessment for that qualification for each Learner at the Centre, or Private Candidate working with the Centre, to whom TLM is required to issue a result under Ofqual VCRF Condition VCR3.1,
- 2. require that Centres judge the TAG against the standard set for the qualification in previous years in which assessments took place, and,
- 3. require Centres to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the TAG is based on the Centre's judgement as to the individual Learner's actual level of attainment based on appropriate evidence.







Internal quality assurance – 'high level signoff'



Appropriate Centre quality assurance in place

Step 5



Teacher assessed grades submitted to TLM

Step 6



TLM external quality assurance in place

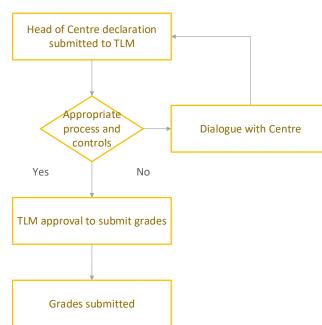
Step 7



Awarding and certification



Annex 2 TLM template for submitting Teacher assessed grades 2021







6. External quality assurance by TLM of Teacher assessed grades

TLM in turn will ensure that it has in place, and complies with, effective arrangements that allow it to undertake external quality assurance of TAGs.

We will draw on a range of information to guide the approach we take to externally quality assure TAGs. This information will include, where relevant and available:

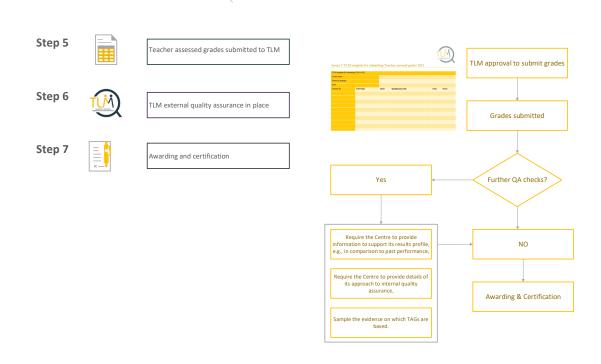
- a) historical Centre results data,
- b) Centre risk profiles, and
- c) the plausibility of results based upon banked Component data.

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the approach your Centre has used to determine a TAG is based on appropriate evidence and is in line with the guidance it has provided to our Centres.

Where TLM considers it necessary for the purposes of conducting its quality assurance we will:

- a) require the Centre to provide information to support its results profile, e.g., in comparison to past performance,
- b) require the Centre to provide details of its approach to internal quality assurance, and
- c) sample the evidence on which TAGs are based.

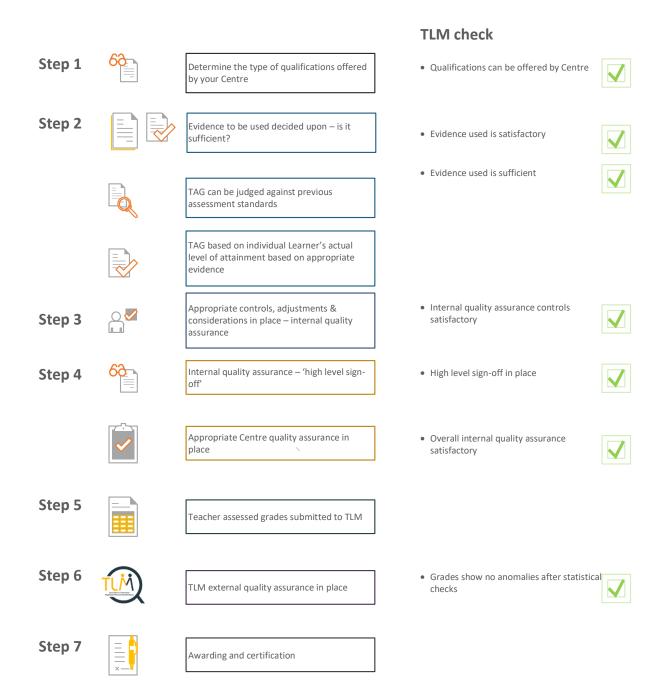
TLM will not issue a result where any issues identified as part of our quality assurance have not been resolved to our satisfaction.





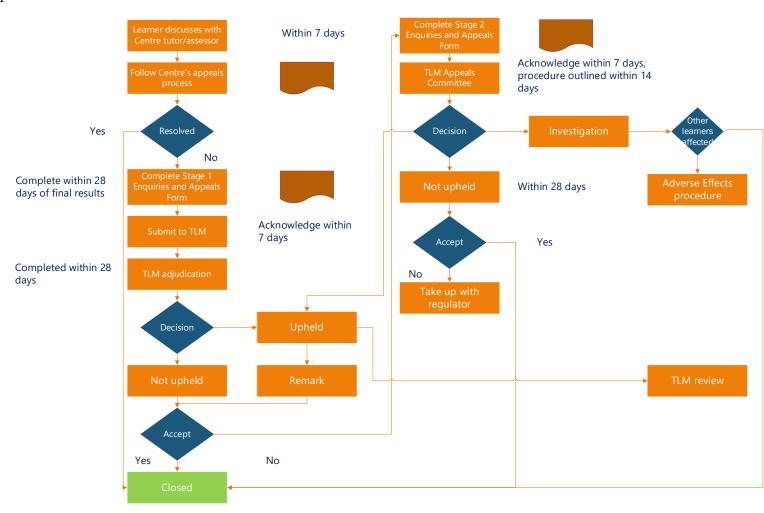
7. Awarding and certification

TLM will follow our normal awarding and certification process following confirmation of the following:





Our Appeals process is as follows:





Annex 1 - Head of Centre declaration

I as the Head of Centre, declare that my Centre's Grades were determined in accordance with guidance received, and as described below:

			Please complete						
Centre name									
Head of Centre name									
Date									
Signature									
Subject	QAN	Method used¹ (sufficient evidence for TAGs)	In line with TLM requirements 2	Consistent approach adopted ³	Additional controls ⁴ (detail below)	Special considerations where necessary	Reasonable adjustments where necessary	High-level checked	Any issues

¹ This is the method used to determine any TAGs, and confirmation that the evidence used is sufficient to make appropriate determinations.

² As set out in TLM's published material and all guidance provided to you.

³ Confirmation that the same approach to grade determination has been used for a particular cohort.

⁴ Necessary where Conflicts of Interest might have occurred for example.



Annex 2 - TLM template for submitting Teacher assessed grades 2021

TLM template for submitting TAGs 2021						
Centre name						
Name of assessor						
Date						
Learner ID	Full Name	QAN	Qualification title	TAG	Notes	