



# VOCATIONAL CONTINGENCY REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Centre guidance - FAQs

## Abstract

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

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# Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF) – Centre guidance - FAQs

## Frequently asked questions

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1. When you talk about sufficiency of evidence for dividing upon a Teacher assessed grade (TAG), you say that 50% of the evidence that a Learner would be anticipated as producing during a typical course of study for the qualification should suffice – can you expand on what 50 % means?

In a normal course of studying for The Learning Machine (TLM) qualifications, evidence about a Learner's performance will be gathered. This will include formal Coursework submitted to us along with classwork such as homework, class notes and Centre devised tests etc. These outputs can all normally be mapped to the knowledge, skills and understanding required of a Learner in order to achieve the qualification – as set out in the qualification's Specification. If this evidence 'in the round' at the point of determining the TAG, can be mapped across to about 50% of the required knowledge, skills and understanding – then we feel that this should combined with your knowledge of the Learner, allow for a safe judgement of a TAG.

Now clearly this may not be an exact science, and for certain cohorts different evidence combinations may well be used. Key though is that you are consistent in your judgements.

The amount of material could be slightly lower if a Centre has the evidence to support such an assertion, e.g., a range of supporting statistical evidence. For example, you might have evidence about Learners' performance and how it compares to other Learners within the qualification/Component this year, and in previous years. So for example, you can show that Learners with a similar bank of evidence at a similar time in previous years have gone on to achieve a certain grade profile – then you could reasonably expect the same grade profile this year. The important point here is that judgements can be explained and are defensible.

Centres should make Learners aware of the sources of evidence that will form the basis of the grades submitted, although Learners should not be told the final grade that is submitted to TLM. As far as possible, the sources of evidence should be consistent across a class or cohort of Learners, and you should record the reasons for your selection. You will make the final judgement about what is to be included and will need to document the rationale for any instances where consistent evidence is not used for a whole class or cohort.

You will be asked to make a holistic judgement of each Learner's performance on a range of evidence relating to the qualification's specification content that they have been taught (either in the classroom or via remote learning). Teachers can use evidence of a Learner's performance from any point during the course of study, provided they are confident that it reflects the Learner's own work.

In coming to these holistic judgements, teachers will use their professional judgement to balance the full range of evidence available for each Learner against the performance standard set out in the grade descriptors and exemplification material, in line with your



internal quality assurance process. You should aim to base your judgments on high quality evidence that clearly relates to the specification, in terms of both content and assessment. TLM will sample some of this evidence as part of our quality assurance, and if we are not satisfied, we could ask you to reconsider your grades for a subject.

If you need further advice on this – please contact TLM.

2. How do you fill in the 'Head of Centre' declaration?

Ofqual provide [guidance](#) on this.

A sample is provided below:



## Head of Centre declaration

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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	<i>East Colston College</i>
Head of Centre name	<i>John Winstanley</i>
Date	<i>20th April 2021</i>
Signature	<i>J Winstanley</i>



Subject	QAN	Method used <sup>1</sup> (sufficient evidence for TAGs)	In line with TLM requirements <sup>2</sup>	Consistent approach adopted <sup>3</sup>	Additional controls <sup>4</sup> (detail below)	Special considerations where necessary	Reasonable adjustments where necessary	High-level checked	Any issues
TLM Level 2 Certificate for IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise	600/6688/ X	Each Learner has two pieces of Course work (Submitted to TLM) + <u>six</u> Centre test results + <u>four</u> samples of homework	We can confirm that this is in line with TLM requirements – work maps to ~60% of Specification's knowledge, skills and understanding requirements	The same consistent approach has been adopted for all Learners taking this qualification.	No additional controls necessary.	No Special Considerations.	Learner XX673, supplied with coloured overlays (dyslexia aid – as we previously informed TLM)	TAGs checked by Sandra Hill, Head of IT Department, East Colston College (TAGs this year have been checked against results for this qualification in 2020 and 2019)	No 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.

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3. Are there time restrictions to submitting material to TLM?

- The last date for submitting your 'Head of Centre declaration' document to TLM is **11 June 2021**. This document should be a single declaration covering all TLM qualifications for which you are submitting TAGs. We will review and get back to you to either approve or discuss further after that.
- The last date for submitting your 'TLM template for submitting TAGs 2021' document containing your TAGs to TLM is **30 June 2021**. This is reliant on you obtaining approval from TLM for your approach as set out in your 'Head of Centre declaration' document.
- We would ask that you submit your 'Head of Centre declaration' document to TLM as soon as you can. Please then allow at least **10 x working days** to elapse before submitting your 'TLM template for submitting TAGs 2021' document to TLM.

4. Will my learners get calculated grades this summer?

Calculated grades were part of the ERF framework for Summer 2020. They do not exist under the VCRF framework.

There is an outline of the qualification groupings on the TLM VCRF pages.

If your qualification has been grouped into Category B, then there is some eligibility for TAGs.

Category A qualifications do not have any eligibility for TAGs and should be evidenced as set out in our guidance.

We would recommend that learners are being offered assessments and that teaching, and learning continues to ensure your learners have the necessary levels of knowledge, skills, and understanding.

5. I have not registered my learners; will they be eligible?

Yes, the VCRF has provision in place to allow for learners who have not yet been registered. They must show as being on programme during the 2020-21 academic year.

Please register your learners with TLM as soon as possible to ensure that you are included on communications about those qualifications.

6. What exactly is a Teacher assessed grade (TAG)?

A TAG is an Ofqual term for a grade awarded using teacher judgement instead of the usual fully completed evidence produced by a learner.

A TAG would consider evidence already produced, alternative assessment and holistic assessment as set out in TLM guidance to inform a reasonable judgement as to whether that learner would have completed the assessment in full had they not been affected by COVID related issues.

7. Should I make adaptations to the assessment approach?



Centres should continue teaching students for as long as possible, to cover as much of the specification content as possible, and they should assess students on as broad a range of specification content as they can. In some cases, individual students might have missed substantially more teaching than their peers and are therefore unable to produce sufficient evidence to support a grade. Heads of centre will be required to confirm that students have been taught sufficient content to provide the basis for a grade. Evidence should relate to the specification content and should reflect, as far as possible, the sorts of questions and tasks that students would normally undertake in preparation for the qualification. Questions and tasks should be appropriately accessible for lower ability students and appropriately demanding to allow higher ability students to demonstrate performance to support higher grades.

If when examining the coverage of knowledge, skills and understanding, it is decided that certain areas require coverage to make a TAG judgement properly and safely – then adapting the normal assessment approach may be a way to provide such evidence and this should be prioritised prior to making the TAG judgement.

For example, if for a certain subject an area of IT work such as ‘file storage’ is necessary to bring the overall level of qualification knowledge, skills and understanding to a level to make appropriate TAG judgements for that qualification – then teaching of this area should be prioritised, with assessments adapted to ensure that sufficient reliable and valid evidence is produced to demonstrate competency.