



VOCATIONAL CONTINGENCY REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Centre guidance – FAQs V2

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 – V2

1. When you talk about sufficiency of evidence for deciding 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

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 ¹ (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
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 understandi ng requirements	The same consistent approach has been adopted for all Learners taking this qualificatio n.	No additional controls necessary.	No Special Consideratio ns.	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 qualificatio n 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.

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.

8. What is TLM’s approach to ‘mid-flight’ learners?

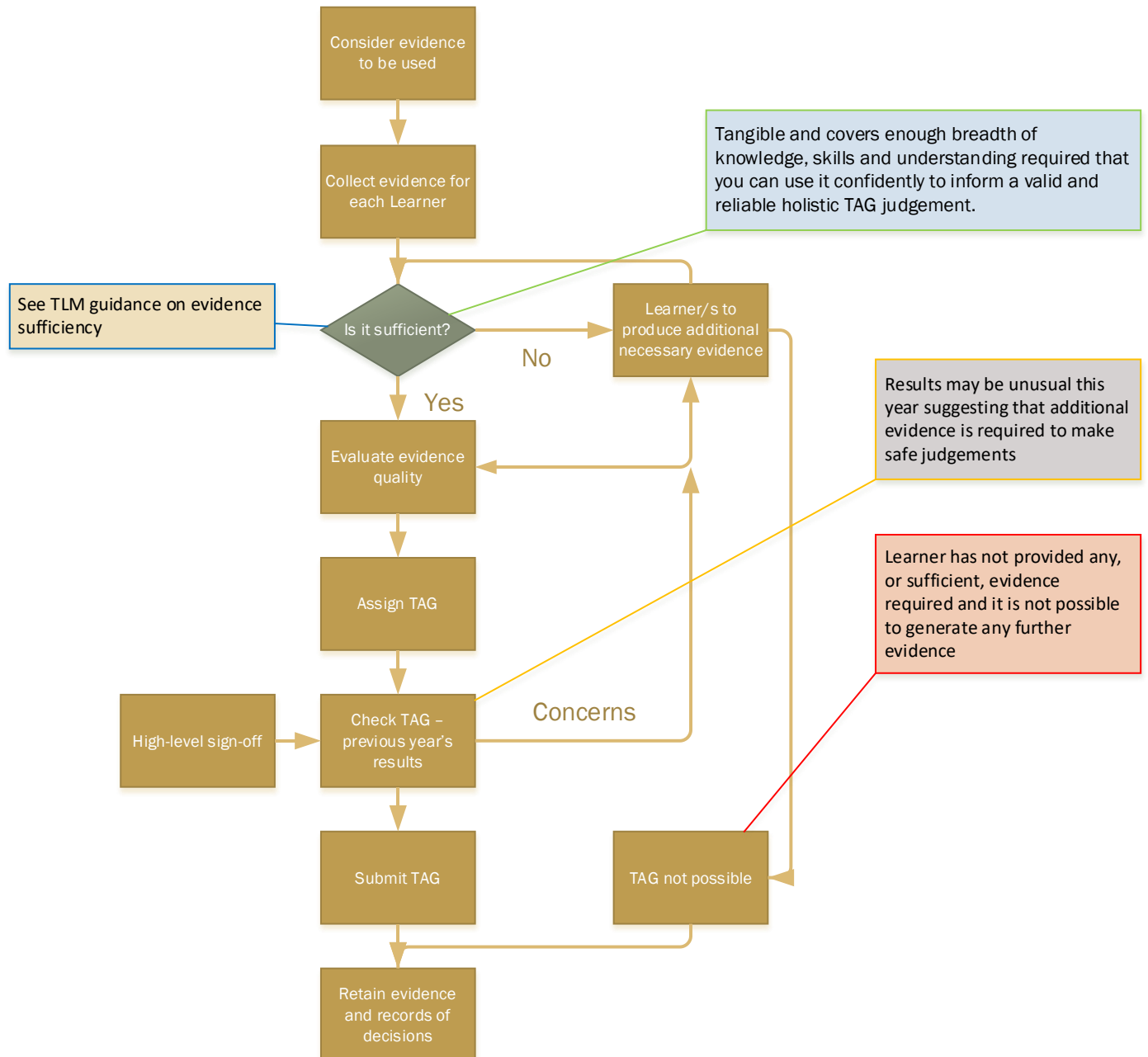
Mid-flight learners are Learners who started a two-year programme in September 2020 and will be certificating in 2022.

We know that mid-flight learners due to certificate next year will have been affected by a different level of disruption than those completing this year. We also understand that there will be a great deal of uncertainty. We will therefore take time to carefully review the situation next academic year and take the impact into account as these learners certificate. We can confirm that we will request TAGs for mid-flight learners, at the appropriate point prior to certification next academic year. We will update on timelines later in 2021 along with further details of the process for 2022.

In the meantime, all assessments for the relevant qualification will need to be taught and assessed wherever possible, and evidence retained, so that it can be quality assured, and used to inform the TAG.

Where possible, teaching, learning and assessment should continue following available TLM subject specific teaching and learning guidance. Please keep all relevant evidence for these learners until certification point. We will provide further information on quality assurance steps when we can.

9. Can you provide further details on the process for generating TAGs?





10. Can you clarify what you mean by ‘high-level’ checks?

A teacher will know his/her Learners well enough to consider whether evidence from each Learner is tangible and covers enough breadth of their programme that they can use it confidently to inform a valid and reliable holistic TAG judgement.

However, there are a number of internal quality assurance checks that will make for a safe judgement:

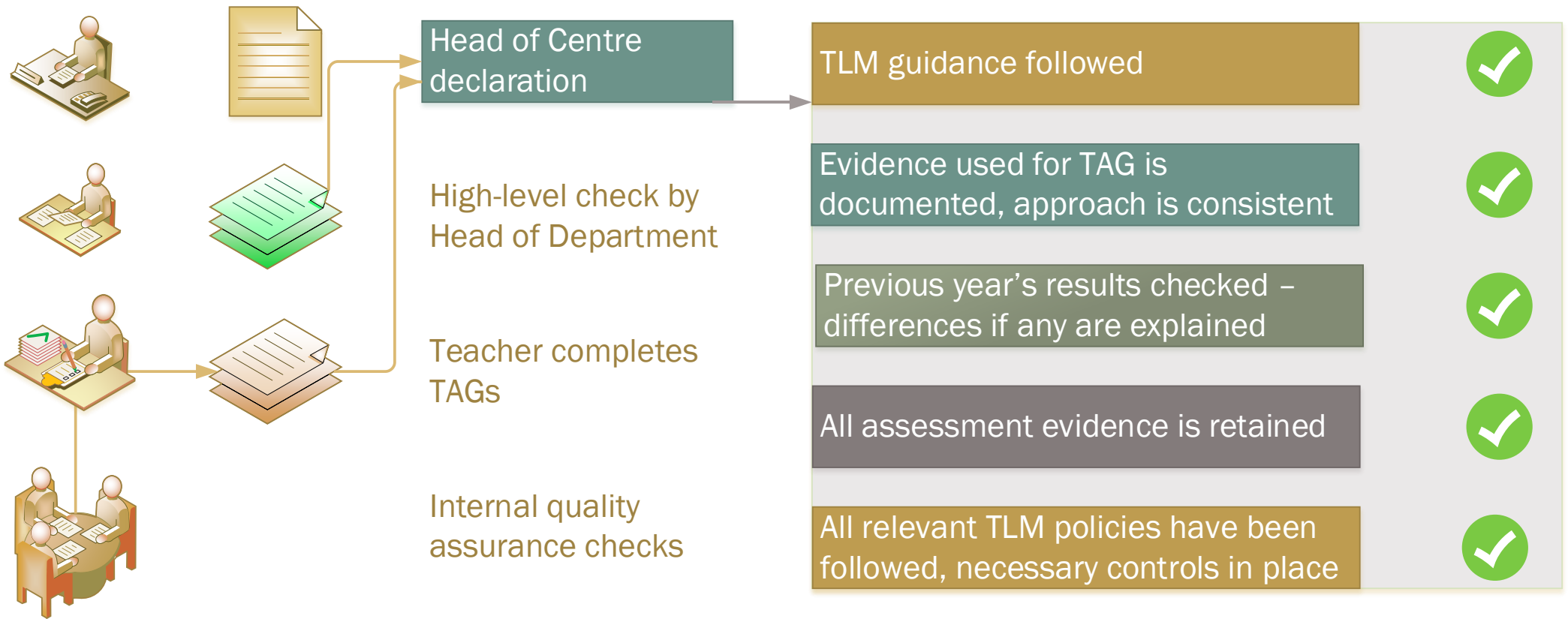
- Is the evidence attributable to the Learner and he/she alone – if part of group work for example, is it their contribution?
- Is the TAG reflective of the results from the same subject taken in previous years at the Centre?
- Is the evidence sufficient and tangible, i.e., reflects at least 50% of the Knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the qualification specification to inform a valid and reliable holistic TAG judgement?
- Is other evidence necessary to generate such a TAG?

Head of Centre Declaration confirms that they have:

1. Ensured that all relevant teaching staff have used the guidance provided by TLM to confirm the TAGs.
2. Ensured that the evidence that has been used for each TAG judgement is sufficiently documented to ensure that it can be explained in the case of Appeals, and to TLM.
3. Considered previous years’ results (if applicable) - if there is a material difference in the results profile expected in 2021, a Centre must be able to explain why its results are significantly different compared to past results (either higher or lower).
4. Ensured that all assessment evidence is kept in line with Ofqual’s VCRF (evidence which is used to support the TAG should be kept until 6 months after the date of the issue of the results, or the conclusion of any related appeals, whichever is later).

Evidence must be made available for the purposes of further TLM EQA checks or an Appeal. This will include documentation that demonstrates the above process for the TAG judgement has been followed:

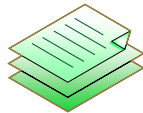
- Records of internal Standardisation activities, in relation to the TAG process and holistic judgements.
 - Evidence sheets for learners.
 - The alternative sources of evidence that have been considered.
 - Any additional Assessment and internal quality assurance materials
 - Any assessed learner work assessment records.
 - Records of performance data used for sense check, with explanation for any deviation in the 2021 TAG judgements (if there is a material difference in the profiles expected in 2021).
5. Ensured they follow all other relevant TLM policies.



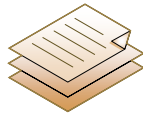
Scenario A



Head of Centre
declaration



High-level check by
Head of Department



Teacher completes
TAGs

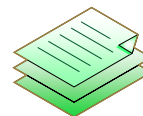


Internal quality
assurance checks

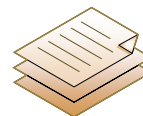
Scenario B



Head of Centre
declaration



High-level check by
member of Senior
Leadership Team



Subject lead
completes TAGs

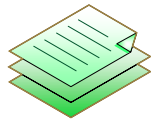


Internal quality
assurance checks

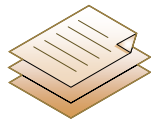
Scenario C



Head of Centre declaration



High-level check by Principal
(Head teacher)/member of
Governing Body



Member of Senior
Leadership Team completes
TAGs



Internal quality assurance
checks