



Contingencies for 2021-2022

Centre guidance

Abstract

This document provides guidance about qualification awarding and certification processes for The Learning Machine Centres in 2021-22.

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Contingencies for 2021-2022

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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.

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

The qualifications regulators published the VCRF to support awarding of qualifications, through Summer up to the 31 August 2021. The Extraordinary Regulatory Framework (ERF) came into effect on 22 May 2020, the Extended ERF on 12 October 2020 and the notice in respect of extended project qualifications on 4 December 2020. The VCRF replaced the ERF, Extended ERF, and continued the theme of adaptations to assessment.

The qualification regulators have revised and amended the 2020 VCRF framework to enable award of vocational and technical qualifications in 2021 -2022. The revised arrangements come into place 1 September 2021.

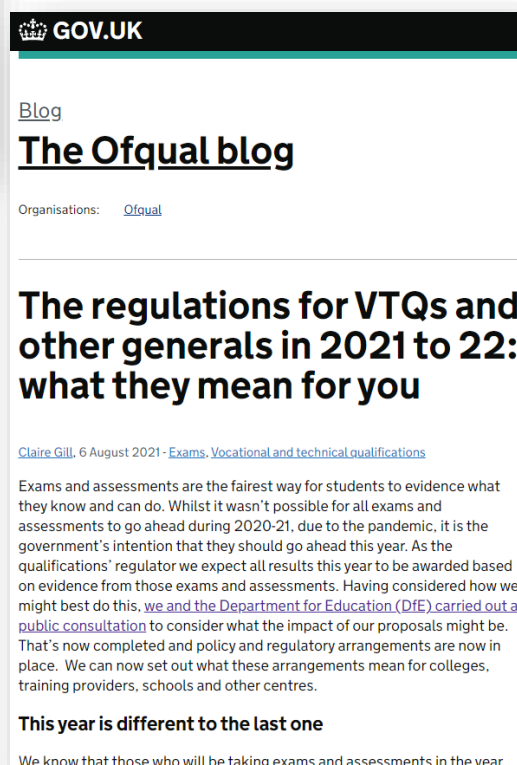
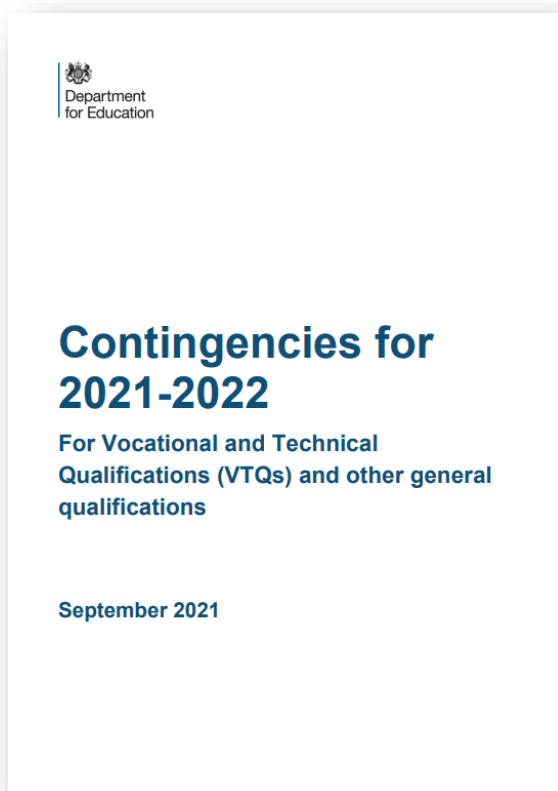
The main outcomes of the recent consultation are:

- Exams and assessments will go ahead in 2021-22, therefore moving away from results being based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) used in 2020-21, where this was permitted.
- Some adaptations may be necessary to account for remaining public health restrictions.
- Recognition has been given to the disruption to teaching and learning this year, with acknowledgment that there is a need to free up teaching time, and address learning loss.
- For qualifications in Category B1, the starting point will be that all content should be taught but some streamlining of assessments may be necessary to free up teaching and learning to address learning loss from the 2020-21 session.
- For qualifications in Category B2 and A, the starting point will be that all content should be taught as it is necessary for the valid award of the qualifications but there may be some adaptations to assessments to address public health restrictions.

We have revised our support and guidance, and this is set out in this document.

If you would like to discuss any of the above, please do contact us.

Ofqual have published a [blog](#) about this and the DfE paper is [here](#).



The regulations for VTQs and other generals in 2021 to 22

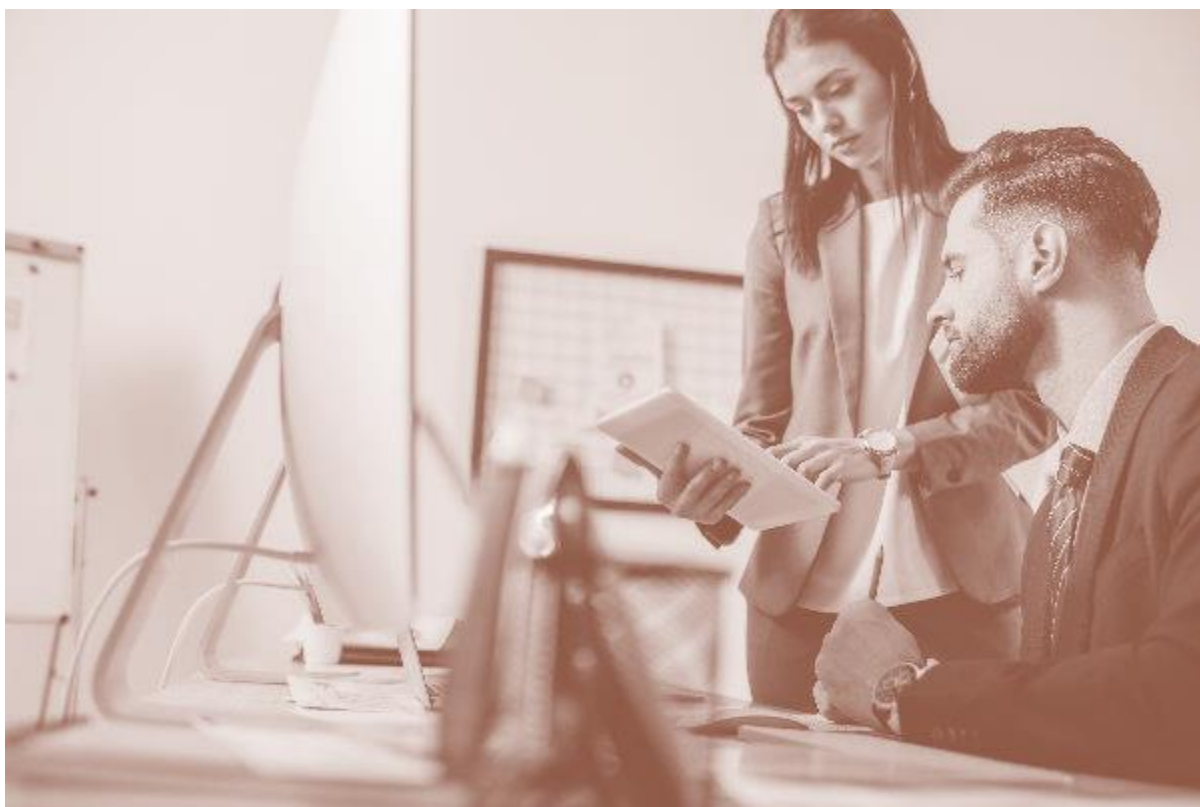
Taken from Ofqual blog (*Claire Gill, Director - Strategic Relationships VTQ, Ofqual*):

- This year is different to the last one. Ofqual are continuing to allow awarding organisations to adapt their exams and assessments for vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs).
- Adaptations to assessments will be allowed. We may see streamlined assessment (for example, reducing duplication of testing of a particular skill), remote invigilation or remote assessment, or a reduction in the number of internal assessments.
- Whilst assessments may be streamlined, that does not mean that it is appropriate to reduce qualification content.
- Many of those adaptations will continue this year too, bringing some stability for teacher and learners.
- Ofqual are expecting awarding organisations to address this: to collaborate so that inconsistencies are minimised; to communicate with you, clearly and accurately, and in co-ordination with one another where possible. Of course, that does not mean that all qualifications will have the same adaptations. The adaptations must suit the existing assessment design and how the qualifications are delivered.
- TAGs were implemented only where assessments and exams could not take place. And as the intention is that exams and assessments will take place, they are not required. However, should it not be possible for exams and assessments to go ahead in the future due to a worsening of the pandemic, then Ofqual's regulatory arrangements are on stand-by.
- Not all learners are starting new qualifications right now. For those who have completed some parts of a qualification in 2020-21 and will complete their qualification in next year or later, what they have done so far will count. They can carry forward any results whatever the means that the result was determined – a TAG, centre assessment grade, or live assessment. Only if they wish to attempt to improve their grade do they need to sit or re-sit the assessment, which they are allowed to do.

- And the same principle will apply for those who are starting a two-year programme of study now. They will do adapted assessments in 2021 to 22 and these will carry forward into their second year.

What happens now?

- The arrangements that have now been confirmed for the 2021-22 academic year, come into effect on 1 September. Colleges, training providers, schools and all other centres will hear from their awarding organisations very shortly about what the adaptations will be. This means that any assessments planned for the autumn, for these VTQs can take place, and will be covered by these regulatory arrangements.



Adaptions for 2021-22

Qualifications with no adaptions

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

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.

Qualifications with adaptations

For the rest of our qualifications, examination and assessment adaptations can be made and these are set out below.

Adaptions to assessments

A number of adaptations are permissible for 2021-22:

- (a) making more teaching and learning time available, for example by considering alternative conditions under which assessments could take place so that they do not all need to be directly supervised, or by streamlining assessments,
- (b) changing the way in which assessments are delivered, for example by using an online rather than paper-based test, or conducting an assessment remotely rather than face-to-face,
- (c) adapting assessment methods to take account of social distancing and public health guidance, for example by using a practical simulation in place of an observation, or professional discussion in place of a practical demonstration,
- (d) changing Invigilation requirements, for example by allowing the use of online Invigilation so that assessments can take place in a wider range of settings,
- (e) waiving or adjusting work experience or placement requirements, for example allowing Learners to undertake a shorter period of work experience, or
- (f) changing the way in which a qualification is quality assured, for example by allowing for standardisation or Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny to take place remotely or on-line.

These were detailed in: [Occupational and technical qualifications contingency regulatory framework, COVID-19 Conditions and Requirements](#), and the adaptations set out therein are still allowed in 2021-22.

Guidance was also available: [Vocational and technical qualifications contingency regulatory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

TLM have not taken the approach of adapting qualifications' assessments *across the board* because we consider that our qualifications normally allow for flexibility of assessment approaches. A Centre may however wish to make a particular adaptation to an assessment approach that is specified by TLM – in these cases, because we need to oversee the maintenance of Validity and Reliability, we would ask that you

maintain a record where you make such adaptations. We ask that you make such adaptations in line with our guidance (below), bearing in mind the purpose of the assessment, i.e., is the adaptation still appropriately assessing the required knowledge, skills and/or understanding?

If you have any concerns or wish to discuss proposed adaptations with us, then please do not hesitate to get in touch. We provide a template that you could use to record any adaptations at Annex 1. And of course, we reserve the right to ask to see records of any adaptations made by you, through our normal quality assurance procedures.



Types of adaptation that may be used

Direct observation not possible?

Adapted assessment conditions can be used where direct observation is usually required but social distancing or other public health measures mean that standard assessment arrangements in the centre are no longer possible.



Remote assessment?

Oral assessment can also provide evidence of unit/qualification coverage that learners may not be able to evidence through other assessment methods at the time and may be conducted remotely, for example online or by phone.

The main type of possible adaptations across our qualifications could for example, include:

Assessment method	Adaption
Assessment of a group of Learners within an allotted time	Time extended to allow for Learners to be assessed in smaller groups
Face to face assessment of a practical skill	Remote assessment
Observation of a skill	Practical simulation
Practical demonstration	Professional discussion
Live invigilation	Remote invigilation
Standardisation meetings	Held remotely or on-line

Examinations – coverage of content

TLM subject guides set out content coverage in examinations – with in some cases, certain areas focussed upon; and in others, 100% coverage.

It is our expectation that in 2021-22, Learners cover all specified content.

We do recognise however, that in certain cases disruption might have occurred leading to Learners not covering all areas of the subject being studied.

On this matter, Ofqual have said:

We do not expect that the content of a qualification should be reduced. Changes to the content should be considered in exceptional circumstances where it is the only way of minimising disadvantage to Learners.

However, it may be appropriate, whilst maintaining taught content, to reduce the amount of content that is assessed, or to change the way the content is assessed, without undermining the Validity and Reliability of the qualification.

TLM will take a flexible approach and will consider how we award qualifications where circumstances have led to issues with Learners not being able to properly access all examination assessment opportunities.

We will consider:

- How our approach minimises disadvantage to those Learners?
- How we might reduce the amount of content that is assessed, or to change the way the content is assessed, without undermining the Validity and Reliability of the qualification?

So to illustrate, a Centre may have covered the key aspects of content but feel that there is an area to be assessed where Learners have been disadvantaged due to a change in teaching method/s. Many of our examinations have options, so this may compensate for this. In other cases, this might not be possible.

Here we might consider adjusting our awarding process and allow for greater emphasis on other areas. As a 'rule of thumb,' we would be aiming for knowledge to be demonstrated for about 70% of the content domain. Each circumstance will be considered on its merits, but in all cases we will ensure that the Validity and Reliability of the qualification is maintained.

If you wish to discuss this with us, again please feel free to get in touch.



Annex 1 – Adaptions for 2021-22

I as the Head of Centre, wish to record the following adaptions to assessments that have been made by my Centre:

Please complete	
Centre name	
Head of Centre name	
Date	
Signature	

Practical assessments

Subject	QAN	Assessment method adapted (TLM specified)	Adaption made	Additional controls implemented (detail below)	Special considerations where necessary	Reasonable adjustments where necessary	Additional comments

I as the Head of Centre, wish to bring the following to TLM's attention:

Examinations

Subject	QAN	Areas of content subject to changed delivery method	Nature of change	Impact on Learners of change	Special considerations where necessary	Reasonable adjustments where necessary	Additional comments
