

Adaptation Addendum

Academic Year 2021-2022

Introduction

The government's intention is that work placements, exams and assessments will take place in the academic year 2021 to 2022, therefore moving away from results being based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) used in 2020 to 2021, where this was permitted. This is because assessments and exams continue to be the fairest way for students to evidence what they know, all other things being equal.

The government recognises, however, that students who will be taking exams and assessments have experienced significant disruption to their education and that these students may also need continued support in the face of any further disruption.

We recognise that students who will be taking exams and assessments in 2021 to 2022 have had significant disruption to their education since March 2020, and we remain committed in continuing to support students in the face of any further disruption.

In the academic year of 2021 to 2022 under the 'Vocational and Technical Qualifications Contingency Regulatory Framework' (VCRF) all qualifications will move into Category A. This means all assessments are expected to continue but we are permitted to continue to make adaptations to assessments and qualifications to take account of the ongoing impact of the pandemic, where we can do so without undermining the validity and reliability of our qualifications.

Students must only access permitted adaptations where they are needed to mitigate the impact of learning loss, continued disruption and / or ongoing public health restrictions. This will be monitored through our external quality assurance process to support the validation of any adaptations adopted, ensuring they are not applied where not needed. Where adaptations are applied unnecessarily, centres may be given an action or downgraded in their EQA reviews, therefore be sure to check with your allocated EQA on the application of any adaptations.

This addendum contains further information on what specific adaptations are permitted for this qualification in the academic year of 2021 to 2022, please see further details below.

Assessment adaptation

No.	Assessment	2021/2022 Academic Year Adaptations
2	Internal assessment: skills and knowledge	All content must be delivered, and all assessment criteria assessed. Internal assessment can be undertaken remotely for Students, where required and where possible. We will also continue to offer remote EQA reviews. Further guidance on how to prepare for this can be found here. We believe that the flexibilities that centres already have with respect to the types of evidence they may use to meet knowledge and skills-based assessment criteria, are sufficient to enable most Students to continue to mitigate the ongoing Covid-related risks. This includes the continuation of the use of alternative assessment methods or evidence where needed or required. You can find further advice and guidance on the preparation of portfolios of evidence here. To support with learning loss, remote learning where required or where centres may experience continued or localised disruption to learning, we've created guidance to support a more streamlined approach to assessment and to increase flexibility. We have updated our guidance here and continue to permit the use of 'centre devised assessments'. We appreciate that to create and capture evidence for the skills aspect of these assessments, Students may need access to specialist facilities/equipment. As our existing guidance permits, to mitigate Covid-related challenges in accessing facilities/equipment, we would encourage centres to consider, for example: • using expert witness testimonies to confirm the observation of Student competence over time where direct observation is not possible • using observation of simulated activity to evidence the demonstration of competence where direct observation is not possible

		- carefully considering how to schedule teaching, learning and assessment activity during the year, recognising that it may not be possible to access specialist facilities/equipment in all weeks. To support with learning loss, we have developed free virtual reality online resources in the subject areas of pregnancy and nursery care, which can be accessed from the following links: NurseryVue is a free, virtual reality immersive experience for all Early Years Students and trainee Childcare and Nursery Assistants. It helps to understand the health and safety factors involved in working with children in a nursery, with our NurseryVue app (currently available for desktop viewing for both PC and Mac). NurseryVue provides an accurate, true-to-life picture of what it's like to work in a nursery setting.
4a	Observation of competence via workplace or mandatory work placement; essential e.g. due to licence to practice requirements in a given occupational area	Where the work placement is essential for occupational competency or licence to practice requirements, the relevant content must still be delivered, and assessment criteria met. It is not possible to award qualifications safely, reliably, and validly if key occupational skills have not been demonstrated and assessed. The adaptations below apply to work-based learning qualifications requiring the proof of competence in Healthcare, Health & Social Care, Adult Care, Early Years and Children and Young People's Workforce: Observations Skills-based competencies must include direct observation of the learner's performance as the main source of evidence and assessment method. This must only be carried out by a centre-based assessor, where it is deemed safe and appropriate following a robust COVID-19 risk assessment process, which takes into account all relevant and current guidance and national/local directives. Where it is not safe to gain direct observation of performance by the assessor, the following

		approaches should be considered - a combination should be used to create a robust triangulation of performance-based evidence for the learner. Expert Witness Testimony (EWT) The use of an Expert Witness is permitted to undertake and provide observations of performance of the student if an observation by a qualified assessor cannot be completed. An Expert Witness must: • have a working knowledge of the units for which they are providing Expert Witness Testimony • be occupationally competent in their area for which they are providing Expert Witness Testimony • have EITHER any qualification in assessment of workplace performance OR a work role which involves evaluating the everyday practice of staff within their area of expertise. The Expert Witness must be provided with induction, training and ongoing support from the assessor/IQA that is timely, meaningful, and appropriate, in order to encourage the provision of a robust statement of the student's performance against agreed standards or criteria. Centres must retain records on the occupational competence of Expert Witnesses. Suitable Expert Witnesses should be explored with the learner and the workplace. Centres should enable Expert Witnesses to provide and present their evidence in an efficient way which does not compromise validity and reliability. This could include: • the use of voice and audio recordings, or • through remote discussions where the main assessor could scribe the Expert Witness contributions (for example via Teams or Zoom), or • over the telephone where the assessor could scribe the testimony. Additionally, centres must adapt their Internal Quality Assurance strategies to ensure that Assessor
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		judgements based on EWT are prioritised for standardisation and sampling activities. The use of Professional Discussion and Reflective Accounts can be used to support other forms of evidence but are not direct evidence sources which can replace the observation requirement. These can be used to support the triangulation of evidence. Remote Technology The use of remote technology is prohibited within early years, schools, childcare and health and social care settings where there is a potential risk of users of the service or their carers/ families being inadvertently seen or heard. This includes the use of all recording and streaming devices such as iPads, mobile phones, laptops and tablets. Please note that technology must not be used to view assessments remotely, even when not recording. For example, Assessors cannot complete remote observations to prove competency by viewing learners 'live' using remote technology. The use of remote technologies could be considered to support aspects of the student's performance. For example, • this may include planning sessions • on-line meetings and remote activities in which the student is contributing, and where the assessor could also attend remotely or observe through use of technology. • assessment planning and feedback • professional discussions • planning for supervision • team meetings where the information shared is not confidential and the appropriate consent has been given In these examples, the learner MUST be in an environment away from any service users. The use of technologies could also be considered for capturing Expert Witness Testimonies.
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		Simulation Assessors will find useful information about simulation and where it is permitted within each Qualification Specification in the individual unit guidance or qualification assessment strategy documentation on our website. Work Products A work product is a resource which is naturally generated within the real work environment, produced or contributed to by the learner and used in the learners' job role. Work products can be used to provide some evidence of competency if direct observation is not possible. The work products can be used to inform a professional discussion and support the learner to show competence, examples of work products include: • reports • non -confidential documents used in carrying out day to day activities • contribution towards policies and procedures Placements Placement Support: We understand that it may be challenging for Students to enter placement settings due to ongoing public health restrictions and therefore, we have created a pre-placement programme for Students who may not be able to access their placements. The preparing for placement programme will be a useful tool for Students to work through whilst waiting for a suitable time to begin their placements or re-enter settings. We have created separate programmes for Students in the following sectors: early years and childcare; health and social care; and, supporting teaching and learning. Find the programme suitable for your Students on the individual sector pages linked below. • Early years and childcare • Health and social care • Supporting teaching and learning
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	Placement hours The following adaptations may apply: • mandated placement hours in work based and license to practice qualifications are relaxed so giving learners a greater chance to achieve the qualification within a limited placement experience when they are not employed in the setting • adapting guidance regarding the requirement for the learner to have experience and evidence of working with more than one age group of children • placement hours should still be planned and documented clearly as required, but the focus is not on the hours or percentage it is around the judgement of competency for the learner over the time of study at the relevant level. If the Learner has not reached the level of competency required, then further placement will need to be scheduled at a later date and therefore completion of the qualification will be delayed • placements need to be planned in early, in line with the qualification specification. Centres could consider block placement rather than weekly, especially for second year learners. Adaptations should also be applied in line with the ‘HSC, Early Years and Childcare - Joint AO Adaptation Guidance’ which can be found in the adaptation section of the qualification webpage when available.
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