

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 these qualifications in the academic year of 2021 to 2022, please see further details below.

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Assessment adaptation

Summary of changes		
Date: December 2021	Version 2.0	Change: Updated information about Covid 19 vaccination requirements added
Date: March 2022	Version 3.0	Change: Updated information about Covid 19 vaccination requirements and work placement
No.	Assessment	2021/2022 Academic Year Adaptations
2	Internal assessment: skills and knowledge	<p>All content must be delivered, and all assessment criteria assessed.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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	<p>updated our guidance here and continue to permit the use of 'centre devised assessments'.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>We've partnered up with VEO, who offer a digital solution for Video Enhanced Observations (VEO). VEO is a secure video online platform for recording and tagging videos. It offers a more efficient way to mark NCFE skills assessments, which can be undertaken remotely. VEO empowers Students and teachers by providing a simple and secure way to capture observation-based assessments, that saves time while preparing Students to pass skill-based assessments. The platform allows you to digitally record and mark practical assessments online and remotely. Please see link here for further details.</p> <p>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:</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • PregnancyVue is a free, virtual reality fully immersive 3D learning experience of its kind. It helps to develop understanding of child development from conception to birth with our PregnancyVue app. A virtual reality (VR) experience designed in consultation with Students, tutors and subject specialists that gives the clearest picture of the pregnancy journey for both mother and child.
4	<p>Observation of competence via workplace or mandatory work placement; essential e.g. due to licence to practice requirements in a given occupational area – CACHE qualifications in Wales and Northern Ireland only.</p>	<p>The work placements in these qualifications are essential for occupational competency or licence to practice requirements; the relevant qualification 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.</p> <p>Although Students are still required to complete the work placement, the focus should be on learning outcomes and evidencing competence. The requirement for Students to complete a minimum number of placement hours may have been removed or reduced (see below), although hours should still be recorded.</p>

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	<p>We have outlined below where it is possible to adopt alternative assessments methods to demonstrate some of the requisite practical skills. These adaptations could include expert witness testimony, simulation or reflective work accounts. Where it is not possible to adapt the assessment and workplace demonstration is still required, we have made this clear.</p> <p>Observations Skills-based competencies must include direct observation of the student'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.</p> <p>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 student.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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	<p>Certification will not be possible for any competency-based qualification unless substantial assessor observations and/or EWT are present in a learner's portfolio and that these are based on experience within a real work setting.</p> <p>Remote Technology</p> <p>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 students 'live' using remote technology. The use of remote technologies could be considered to support aspects of the student's performance. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>In these examples, the student MUST be in an environment away from any service users. The use of technologies could also be considered for capturing Expert Witness Testimonies.</p>
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		<p>Simulation</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Work Products</p> <p>A work product is a resource which is naturally generated within the real work environment, produced or contributed to by the student and used in the students' 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 student to show competence, examples of work products include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reports • non -confidential documents used in carrying out day to day activities • contribution towards policies and procedures <p>No further alternative awarding arrangements can be applied to mandatory work placements, therefore where they cannot be completed a delay may be required.</p> <p>Placement Support</p> <p>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</p>
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	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years and childcare • Health and social care • Supporting teaching and learning <p>COVID-19 vaccination requirements and work placement</p> <p>With government revoking vaccination as a condition of deployment across all health and social care settings from March 2022, placement acceptance will return to individual employer-based acceptance requirements. We therefore recommend centres make every effort to ensure they (and their learners) are fully aware of government requirements in relation to COVID-19 vaccinations as well as communicating with employers when sourcing and planning work placement opportunities for their learners.</p> <p>Please refer to the gov.uk webpage for advice and guidance regarding COVID-19 vaccination.</p> <p>Placement hours</p> <p>Where a work experience/practice requirement is a mandatory requirement within a qualification, wherever possible Awarding Organisations/Bodies expect all learners to achieve this requirement in full. Where this is not possible due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions, learners will only be able to progress to certification in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the learner has completed at least 70% of the required work experience/practice hours and all attempts to access further hours have been
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		<p>exhausted (see the QW & CCEA Joint AO Adaptation Guidance for full calculations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • steps have been taken to support the learner to achieve the required work experience/practice hours,8 including part-time employment, bank and relief options, volunteering, work during holiday periods • actions taken to secure the full requirement of work experience/practice hours have been recorded and are available for internal and external quality assurance. <p>All adaptations must be applied in line with the QW & CCEA Joint AO Adaptation Guidance which has been agreed by the Joint Awarding Organisation Quality Group for Wales and Northern Ireland and applies to work-based learning qualifications requiring the proof of competence in Health and Social Care, Child Development and Well-being. This document will be published on our website when it is available.</p>
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Information in this qualification adaptation addendum is correct at the time of publishing but may be subject to change.

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**** To continue to improve our levels of customer service, telephone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.***

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