

Extended Extraordinary Regulatory Framework English and Mathematics Qualifications

English Skills, English Stepping Stones to Functional Skills, Mathematical Skills and Mathematics Stepping Stones to Functional Skills. (A full list of qualifications covered by this guidance is listed in [Appendix \(I\)](#))

Now that the ERF is finished, the regulators are implementing an extended version for the 2020-21 academic year. This is because they acknowledge that further disruption to teaching and learning is possible due to local lockdowns and social distancing measures. This regulatory framework will allow the usual 'rules' to be flexed temporarily.

The regulators have confirmed that there will be NO Centre Assessment Grades / calculated results under the Extended ERF.

This framework will run alongside the General Conditions for the whole of the 2020-21 academic year. Learners will achieve either under the General Conditions or under the EERF.

Context: English and Mathematics qualifications and the ERF (ended 31st July 2020)

The mitigation against the disruption caused by the lockdown for Ascentis English and Mathematics qualifications was confirmed by the regulators as 'calculate.' The only avenue available for achievement during the summer was a calculated result (a Centre Assessment Grade / CAG). This had to be based on **sufficient trusted evidence** that met a minimum threshold. There was no expectation for Centres to continue any assessment processes with learners after 21st March.

A number of Centres opted to delay achievement as they had insufficient trusted evidence to determine CAGs. **Centres that opted to delay should be making every effort to support those learners who would have achieved by 31st July 2020 to achieve by the end of December 2020.**

English and Mathematics qualifications and the Extended ERF

The regulators have consulted on an extended version of the ERF for the current academic year because of the possibility of further disruption to teaching and learning due to local lockdowns and social distancing measures. This regulatory framework will allow the usual 'rules' to be flexed until 31st July 2021. Awarding Organisations have been required to consider what adaptations they will make available to Centres in 20-21 under the Extended ERF **if Centres need to be more flexible than the General Conditions allow. If Centres can carry on as normal, albeit using social distancing protocols, then they may not need to consider the Extended ERF.**

Current situation with Ascentis English and Mathematics qualifications

All Ascentis English and Mathematics qualifications at all levels use externally set assessments, with resources available on demand to Centres. Three complete sets are available at any one time to all Centres. Learners therefore have three opportunities to achieve in an academic year.

All assessments are taken in controlled conditions. Some units require face-to-face interaction between learner and tutor / assessor. Some English units require group interaction.

Ascentis English and Mathematics qualifications were developed to be flexible, with modular assessments that can be taken during usual class time, (under controlled conditions) which are available on-demand. The regulators would like us to promote this feature to Centres who may not be taking advantage of the 'modular' approach already.

Potential issues in 2020-21

- Disruption due to local lockdowns – Centres having to suspend contact with learners and scheduled assessment sessions being cancelled. This may result in learners not achieving the full qualification in the academic year.
- Social distancing requirements affecting the way controlled assessments are taken.

Many Centres use academic year assessment approaches rather than assess a unit/component as they go. We strongly advise Centres to **'bank'** assessments/units. This would mean that assessment and internal verification could still continue cumulatively and the risk that the qualification won't be completed by the end of the academic year would be reduced. If only one unit is delayed, this could be completed as soon as possible, (e.g. after a local lockdown is lifted), rather than learners having to complete a full award / extended award / certificate after a hiatus in their learning.

This would also mean that learners could claim unit certification, even if they have not completed enough units to claim for the larger qualification. This would ensure fewer learners are disadvantaged by not having evidence of progression and achievement.

Social distancing measures will mean smaller class sizes and smaller assessment groups for most of our Centres. This may result in a larger number of separate assessment **sessions** over a period of time. The risk of learners being able to share the content of an assessment with other learners who are still due to sit the assessment is therefore increased.

Ascentis permitted adaptations under the EERF

Centres will be given the option to scan in and send assessments electronically to EQAs for verification in exceptional circumstances where original copies cannot be posted.

This is a change in the normal process where original copies of assessments are to be sent through secure and tracked post. Where local restrictions are put in place that would make the posting of original assessments overly burdensome, we will allow Centres to scan in those scripts selected for sampling by an External Quality Assurer (EQA). These scanned copies can be sent to the EQA if this helps to avoid disadvantaging learners who would otherwise not receive timely results and certification.

Risks

- There is a risk that Centres will not send these through secure/encrypted platforms which imposes a much higher risk of the integrity of the qualification becoming compromised.
- There will be duplicate copies (possible multiple duplications), both hard copy and electronic, which increases risk that there may be a breach of assessment confidentiality.
- Some of our Maths assessments contain elements involving the measurement of lines and angles. Different screens and printers will show these lines as different measurements to the physical paper the learner was given.
- There is a risk that the scanning equipment held in Centres, do not scan in colour or to a high enough quality for all the marks, feedback or learner responses can be clearly seen.
- Electronic copies may be easier to tamper with. Content can be deleted/changed and so the authenticity and validity of the assessment responses may be less secure.

Conditions to mitigate risk

- Centres **MUST retain ALL original copies** of documents they have scanned in, if claiming achievement this way under the EERF. Ascentis reserves the right to request the original copies at any time during the period of the EERF (i.e. until 31st July 2021).
- EQAs may request original copies as part of the verification process if they are not satisfied with the scanned versions (for whatever reason) and Centres must be able to provide these prior to achievement being confirmed.
- Centres must train staff in scanning documents into appropriately labelled and organised folders / files, so that documents can be easily identified / located / signposted to EQAs.
- Centres must devise a documented process for securely sending electronic copies of live assessments while mitigating the risk outlined above. This should cover the management, monitoring and deletion of any electronic copies made.

This adaptation will be permitted **as a last resort** and a rationale will be required from the Centre as to why the original copies cannot be sent and how they plan to mitigate the risk identified.

If it is necessary for a Centre to use this adaptation, they must email qualityassurance@ascentis.co.uk in advance, to provide information relating to the specific circumstances preventing original copies from being sent for verification. The Centre must provide Ascentis with information on how they will be encrypting the documents / assessments and/or which secure platform they intend to use to share the confidential material.

Ascentis has permitted no other formal adaptations under the EERF

Please note that online or remote assessment of live assessments is NOT permitted for Ascentis English and Mathematics Skills as an adaptation under the EERF.

This is because:

- We could not ensure the confidentiality of the live assessment materials if these were to be shared with individuals online. There would be a much higher risk of the integrity of the qualification becoming compromised.
- Ascentis does not currently have a sufficiently tried and tested online platform for learners to complete English and Mathematics Skills assessments remotely (i.e. away from Centres without staff supervision).
- Ascentis would need to manage and monitor Centres' use of IT to ensure that it did not disadvantage learners taking assessments (in terms of both technological ability and the assessment of specific communication skills online in a less natural situation).
- We would have to insist on 100% internal verification of such an adaptation, which would increase the burden on Centre workloads.

However, Centres do have the option use blended delivery models to keep face-to-face contact with learners to a minimum where necessary, and practice assessments may be taken online. When learners are ready, time in the Centre could be focused on completing live assessments in small groups under controlled and socially-distanced conditions.

Ascentis support for Centres

Centres will be permitted to use online platforms for remote practice assessments

Ascentis will host a webinar to support Centres and share best practice of how to adapt practice papers for online/remote use in a way that is accessible to learners and poses the least risk to the assessment content. The focus of the webinar will be on the explanation of the adaptations and their rationale, and then to share some ideas with / between Centres around the use of online platforms for blended delivery / practice assessments. Please see events page on the Ascentis website for webinar dates.

Sample assessments are available on the website that can be accessed by Centres and learners. As these assessments follow the same format as the live papers, they give the learners another opportunity to practise and act as an additional resource for Centres to prepare learners for live assessments.

Risk – Centres could adapt practice assessments without ensuring their direct comparability with live assessments, and so the practice activity may not be valid or result in a 'false' outcome.

Risk - There is a risk that practice papers may be sent to learners through an insecure platform where the content may be shared/published in the public domain. Centres must consider the risks in relation to this and communicate with their EQA if they intend to use or adapt practice assessments online.

Summary

We will support Centres by explaining the rationale behind our decisions regarding live assessments under the Extended ERF and work with them on their planning for the year ahead and with their 'logistics' in the event of local lockdown restrictions.

We will support Centres to deliver course content and practice assessments online so that they can minimise attendance in Centres if this is what is required.

We will support Centres by permitting them to scan and send completed assessments electronically for the purposes of External Quality Assurance activity, where there is no possibility to send the originals due to imposed lockdown restrictions. This adaptation will be used only as a last resort.

Appendix (I) - Qualifications covered by this guidance

English Skills

Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Grammar and Punctuation (Entry 1) (601/2581/0)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Reading (Entry 1) (601/2582/2)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Receiving and Responding to Information (Entry 1) (601/2580/9)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Speaking (Entry 1) (601/2585/8)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Spelling (Entry 1) (601/2578/0)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Writing (Entry 1) (601/2583/4)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English Skills (Entry 1) (601/3859/2)
Ascentis Entry Level Extended Award in English Skills (Entry 1) (601/3863/4)
Ascentis Entry Level Certificate in English Skills (Entry 1) (601/2572/X)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Grammar and Punctuation (Entry 2) (601/2571/8)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Reading (Entry 2) (601/2568/8)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Receiving and Responding to Information (Entry 2) (601/2570/6)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Speaking (Entry 2) (601/2579/2)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Spelling (Entry 2) (601/2567/6)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Writing (Entry 2) (601/2569/X)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English Skills (Entry 2) (601/3862/2)
Ascentis Entry Level Extended Award in English Skills (Entry 2) (601/3861/0)
Ascentis Entry Level Certificate in English Skills (Entry 2) (601/2540/8)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Grammar and Punctuation (Entry 3) (601/0867/8)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Reading (Entry 3) (601/0866/6)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Receiving and Responding to Information (Entry 3) (601/0868/X)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Speaking (Entry 3) (601/0870/8)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Spelling (Entry 3) (601/0869/1)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English - Writing (Entry 3) (601/0985/3)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in English Skills (Entry 3) (601/3860/9)
Ascentis Entry Level Extended Award in English Skills (Entry 3) (601/3858/0)
Ascentis Entry Level Certificate in English Skills (Entry 3) (601/1031/4)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English - Grammar and Punctuation (600/7792/X)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English - Reading (600/7688/4)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English - Receiving and Responding to Information (600/7702/5)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English - Speaking (600/7687/2)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English - Spelling (600/7899/6)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English - Writing (600/7703/7)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English Skills (601/3857/9)
Ascentis Level 1 Extended Award in English Skills (601/3856/7)
Ascentis Level 1 Certificate in English Skills (600/8181/8)
Ascentis Level 2 Award in English - Grammar and Punctuation (601/0927/0)
Ascentis Level 2 Award in English - Reading (601/0871/X)
Ascentis Level 2 Award in English - Receiving and Responding to Information (601/0928/2)
Ascentis Level 2 Award in English - Speaking (601/0929/4)
Ascentis Level 2 Award in English - Spelling and Vocabulary (601/0930/0)
Ascentis Level 2 Award in English - Writing (601/0931/2)
Ascentis Level 2 Certificate in English Skills (601/1032/6)

English Stepping Stones to Functional Skills

Ascentis Level 1 Award in English (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) – Reading (603/4752/1)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) – Writing (603/4753/3)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) – Grammar & Punctuation (603/4755/7)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) – Speaking & Listening (603/4762/4)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) – Spelling (603/4758/2)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in English (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) (603/4750/8)
Ascentis Level 1 Extended Award in English (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) (603/4751/X)
Ascentis Level 1 Certificate in English (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) (603/4754/5)

Mathematical Skills

Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Addition Skills (Entry 1) (601/2196/8)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Data Handling (Entry 1) (601/2197/X)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Subtraction Skills (Entry 1) (601/2203/1)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Measures (Entry 1) (601/2207/9)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Money and Time (Entry 1) (601/2208/0)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Shape and Space (Entry 1) (601/2209/2)
Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Whole Numbers (Entry 1) (601/2212/2)

Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills (Entry 1) (601/3827/0)
 Ascentis Entry Level Extended Award in Mathematical Skills (Entry 1) (601/3829/4)
 Ascentis Entry Level Certificate in Mathematical Skills (Entry 1) (601/2146/4)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Addition of Whole Numbers (Entry 2) (601/2195/6)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Data Handling: Collecting and Representing Data (Entry 2) (601/2198/1)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Data Handling: Extracting and Sorting Data (Entry 2) (601/2199/3)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Developing and Applying Fraction Skills (Entry 2) (601/2200/6)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Multiplication of Whole Numbers (Entry 2) (601/2201/8)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Subtraction of Whole Numbers (Entry 2) (601/2202/X)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding and Using Money (Entry 2) (601/2204/3)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Measure: Length (Entry 2) (601/2205/5)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Measure: Weight, Capacity and Temperature (Entry 2) (601/2206/7)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Shape and Space (Entry 2) (601/2210/9)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Time (Entry 2) (601/2211/0)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Whole Numbers (Entry 2) (601/2213/4)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills (Entry 2) (601/3844/0)
 Ascentis Entry Level Extended Award in Mathematical Skills (Entry 2) (601/3830/0)
 Ascentis Entry Level Certificate in Mathematical Skills (Entry 2) (601/2145/2)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Data Handling: Extracting and Interpreting Data (Entry 3) (601/0974/9)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Data Handling: Recording and Representing Data (Entry 3) (601/0975/0)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Developing and Applying Addition and Subtraction Skills (Entry 3) (601/1033/8)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Developing and Applying Decimal Skills (Entry 3) (601/1034/X)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Developing and Applying Fraction Skills (Entry 3) (601/0976/2)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Developing and Applying Number Skills (Entry 3) (601/0982/8)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Developing and Applying Shape and Space Skills (Entry 3) (601/0977/4)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Division of Whole Numbers (Entry 3) (601/0980/4)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Measure: Capacity and Temperature (Entry 3) (601/0978/6)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Measure: Distance and Length (Entry 3) (601/0979/8)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Money: Adding and Subtracting (Entry 3) (601/0981/6)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Multiplication of Whole Numbers (Entry 3) (601/0983/X)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills - Time (Entry 3) (601/0984/1)
 Ascentis Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills (Entry 3) (601/3840/3)
 Ascentis Entry Level Extended Award in Mathematical Skills (Entry 3) (601/3841/5)
 Ascentis Entry Level Certificate in Mathematical Skills (Entry 3) (601/1030/2)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Data Calculations (600/7914/9)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Handling Data (600/7900/9)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Measure: Time and Temperature (600/7901/0)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Probability (600/7902/2)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding and Using 2D Shapes (600/7904/6)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding and Using Decimals (600/7790/6)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding and Using Fractions (600/7789/X)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding and Using Percentages (600/7791/8)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Length, Weight and Capacity (600/7903/4)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Numbers (600/7786/4)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Perimeter and Area (600/7905/8)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Volume (600/7915/0)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Using Calculations: Addition and Subtraction of Whole Numbers (600/7787/6)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills - Using Calculations: Multiplication and Division of Whole Numbers (600/7788/8)
 Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematical Skills (601/3828/2)
 Ascentis Level 1 Extended Award in Mathematical Skills (601/3831/2)
 Ascentis Level 1 Certificate in Mathematical Skills (600/7916/2)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Data Calculations (601/0966/X)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Handling Data (601/0740/6)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Probability (601/0741/8)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding and Using Decimals (601/0967/1)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding and Using Percentages (601/0968/3)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Fractions, Ratios and Proportion (601/0969/5)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Length, Weight and Capacity (601/0971/3)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Money, Time and Temperature (601/0972/5)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Numbers and Formulae (601/0973/7)
 Ascentis Level 2 Award in Mathematical Skills - Understanding Shape and Space (601/0742/X)
 Ascentis Level 2 Certificate in Mathematical Skills (601/1035/1)

Mathematics Stepping Stones to Functional Skills

Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Understanding Numbers (603/4733/8)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Using Calculations: Addition and Subtraction of Whole Numbers (603/4734/X)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Using Calculations: Multiplication and Division of Whole Numbers (603/4735/1)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Understanding and Using Fractions (603/4736/3)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Understanding and Using Decimals (603/4737/5)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Understanding and Using Percentages (603/4738/7)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Measure: Time (603/4739/9)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Understanding Length, Weight and Capacity (603/4740/5)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Understanding Perimeter and Area (603/4741/7)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Understanding Volume (603/4742/9)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Understanding and Using 2D Shapes (603/4743/0)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Handling Data (603/4744/2)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Data Calculations (603/4745/4)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) - Probability (603/4746/6)
Ascentis Level 1 Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) (603/4747/8)
Ascentis Level 1 Extended Award in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) (603/4748/X)
Ascentis Level 1 Certificate in Mathematics (Stepping Stones to Functional Skills) (603/4749/1)