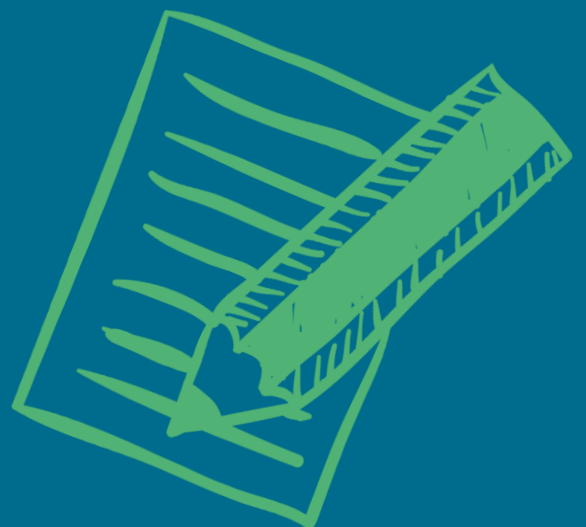


Ascentis Vocational Qualifications Awarding Summer 2020 Guidance - Extraordinary Regulatory Framework

Ofqual, Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and Qualification Wales (QW) regulated provision



QUALITY ASSURANCE

ASCENTIS AWARDING ORGANISATION Version 3 – 17th June 2020

www.ascentis.co.uk



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Introduction

This document will provide guidance to Centres regarding the calculation of results, adaption and delay for learners who have been affected by the COVID-19 disruption during the summer assessment series. This follows from the government direction for Vocational and Technical Qualifications. On the 22nd May 2020 Ofqual, CCEA and Qualification Wales confirmed the arrangements for the awarding of Vocational and Technical qualifications in summer 2020. Further information is available in the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/exceptional-arrangements-for-awarding-qualifications-this-summer>

The direction indicates that, where possible, learners who are taking Vocational and Technical Qualifications that are used for progression to and through employment, Further or Higher Education, should be issued a set of results this summer in order to allow them to progress to the next stage of their lives. For some assessments, this means that Centres will need to calculate learner results. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to Centres on the calculation of learners' results. If there is insufficient evidence to meet minimum threshold the Centre assessment grades, this guidance will provide information on adaption and/or delay mitigations.

The guidance within this document applies to all in scope Ascentis qualifications, is not exhaustive, and provides guidance to Centres in the current climate. Please note that due to the development and changes of the Covid-19 pandemic, changes may occur swiftly. Therefore, please ensure that you are accessing the latest version online. This document has been created by Ascentis, utilising information provided by Ofqual, CCEA and Qualification Wales, and based on a common approach developed through collaboration with other Awarding Organisations.

Scope

Ofqual have launched an [interactive tool](#), to help navigate the approach for Vocational and Technical Qualifications this summer. The tool allows users to search for a specific regulated qualification to find out how results will be generated for the majority of learners.

Ofqual published Guidance for Centres: '[The awarding of vocational and technical qualifications, and other general qualifications, in summer 2020](#)'

English, Maths & ESOL

This guidance covers CAGs for the following qualifications.

- Maths
- English
- ESOL Skills for Life

At all levels (Entry 1 to level 2).

Portfolio Qualifications

This guidance covers CAGs for the following qualifications.

- All Portfolio based qualifications at all levels. There are further additional considerations in relation to Education and Training qualifications, where there is additional guidance from the Education and Training Foundation. Further guidance about these qualifications will be communicated to Centres in due course.

Eligible Learners

You must ensure that all learners who have not yet been registered for a qualification, but who would have been registered to take the qualification this summer and complete the assessment by the 31 July 2020, are registered in the normal way. This should be done as soon as possible to ensure that the relevant learners are eligible to receive a result this year. It is expected that you will have evidence to prove that the learners would have been ready for assessment and this may be checked as part of our quality assurance process.

Centres must not include results for any learner they would not expect to have taken the assessment during this period.

Please therefore only register learners who haven't previously been registered and who you expect would have been ready to complete their assessment between **20th March and 31st July 2020**. Learners must be registered on QuartzWeb **by Monday 8th June 2020**. Please contact Ascentis if this date is not achievable.

English, Maths & ESOL

Centres should submit CAGs for all learners affected by the Covid-19 disruption. This is defined as **all learners who they would expect to have taken the assessment / exam between 21 March and 31 July. This includes:**

- **Learners attempting the assessment for the first time:**
- **Learners resitting the assessment.** It is acknowledged that learners may have both attempted for the first time and resat an exam /assessment during this period.

Portfolio Qualifications

Where the Centre cannot continue to deliver and feel that their Learners would be disadvantaged, the Centre can submit CAGs for learners that meet the Minimum Threshold of Requirements.

Centres should submit CAGs for all learners affected by the Covid-19 disruption. This is defined as **all learners who they would expect to have completed their qualification before 31 July.**

An Overview of Centre Assessment Grades

Definition: Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) is the term used throughout to refer to the evidence-based provisional judgement of a candidate's result, which a Centre submits to the awarding organisation

This is a one-off, time-limited process offered to minimise disruption caused by measures taken by government in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic so that as far as possible, learners due to take assessments during this period are not disadvantaged.

1. Centres are permitted to make **one** submission, which must cover all learners expected to take ESOL / English / Maths assessments between 21st March and 31st July 2020 and all learners expected to complete their Portfolio Qualification before 31st July 2020.
2. Once a submission has been made by a Centre, Ascentis will not consider any subsequent submission by that Centre (except as part of issue resolution requested by Ascentis).
3. There will be no right of appeal by the Centre or learner against the result. An appeal based on whether the process was followed will be offered.
4. Ascentis reserves the right to review evidence used by Centres to reach judgements about CAGs on request. This may be through a quality assurance of the Centre's submission and/or through routine EQA when this resumes.
5. As part of quality assurance of a Centre's submission, Ascentis may ask the Centre to reconsider its submitted CAGs.
6. Ascentis will take all reasonable steps to support Centres in resolving quality assurance queries about a Centre's submission but as a last resort, may reject all or part of the submission.
7. It is expected that for a range of reasons related to the current situation some Centres may not be able to participate. These may include for example:
 - Centres with furloughed staff
 - Centres who are operating at the limits of their capacity

In such cases, every effort will be made to minimise disadvantage but delaying assessment may be unavoidable.

Calculate

In line with other Awarding Organisations, Ascentis has taken the approach that it will, in conjunction with the judgements of its Centres, and where it is possible and safe to do so, estimate and issue a calculated result for learners who have been affected by the COVID disruption.

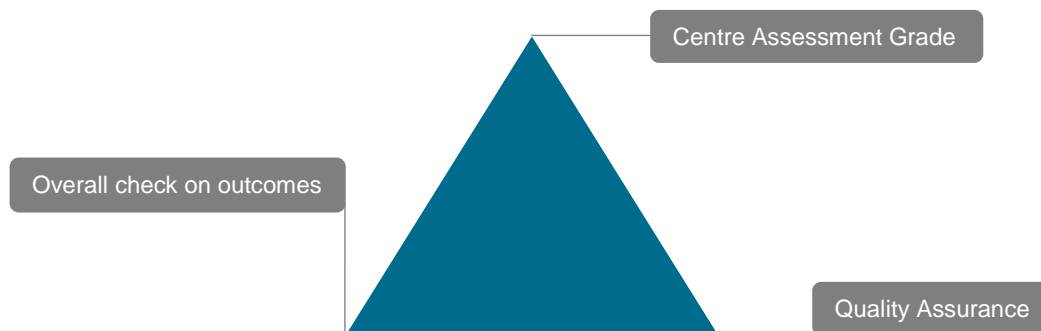
A calculated result will be based on a Centre's Centre Assessment Grade (CAG). A Centre assessment grade (CAG) is the term used throughout this guidance to refer to the evidence-based, provisional, judgement of a learner's unit result, which a Centre submits to Ascentis. Only when the result has been quality assured by Ascentis will a calculated result be issued.

The calculated result will consist of a CAG, determined by the Centre, which will be subject to Quality Assurance activities by Ascentis. Once Quality Assurance activities have been completed, Ascentis will complete an overall check on outcomes to confirm the accuracy and profile of results before confirming these to Centres. The calculated result will be used by Centres to claim for learner achievement of the unit/qualification and therefore must meet qualification and sector requirements. Learners who receive a calculated result will be issued with the same qualification certificate that they would have expected to receive if they completed their qualification outside of the COVID-19 disruption. This is illustrated by the figure overleaf.

The method of calculating results has three elements.

The final result for all qualifications will follow the structure outlined below.

1. Centre Assessment Grades (CAG/s) based on results they already hold for the learner.
2. Quality Assurance of the overall calculated result: comparison to historic Centre outcomes, entries and certification data.
3. Overall check on overall qualification level outcomes: comparison to historic Centre and qualification data, to ensure overall qualification attainment is broadly in line with previous years. This may involve further communication with Centres if necessary.



Where the principal mitigation is the issuing of calculated results, this will draw on a range of different types of evidence, and this may vary depending upon the qualification. We will consider what evidence is available and develop the most appropriate approach for each qualification. You should provide the results you believe a learner would most likely have achieved, if teaching and learning had continued as planned for the remaining incomplete units of the qualification (both internal and external).

Centres should assume that any reasonable adjustments that would have been sought for a particular learner when taking their assessments would have been in place. You will be asked to provide a CAG for any remaining units that would have been planned to take place between the 21st March and 31st July 2020.

Following the CAG, you must upload your results to QuartzWeb from 10th June and no later than 10th July 2020, by which time a declaration of the evidence contributing towards the calculation of a result must have been submitted.

Centres Continuing Delivery/Assessment as Normal, or Where Learners Completed Assessment Prior To 21st March

Where Centres are able to deliver our qualifications to learners as normal (in line with Ascentis requirements), you can continue to do so.

If you are in a situation where;

- you have been able to continue to deliver our qualifications as normal and you have been able to adapt your way of working within the government guidance, and provided that this does not compromise the validity of the assessments
- you have completed learners and were ready for an EQA review, this should take place. Please contact your EQA to arrange a remote verification. Your EQA will provide guidance on how to send learner work and may need to contact you should they require any further information in order to complete their report.

Centres should not claim under the ERF under these circumstances.

Centre Assessment Process

We want you to consider each learner's performance over the course of study and make a realistic judgement of the grade each learner would have been most likely to receive if they had completed the relevant unit(s) or qualification. You should not provide a CAG where there is no/insufficient evidence upon which to base one. While we aim to provide results to as many learners as possible, in cases where there is not sufficient evidence to support an estimated grade for a learner, this will not be accepted by Ascentis. Centres must retain all relevant evidence; this will support the quality assurance process and may be subject to audit by Ascentis.

For each learner, the member/s of staff judging the CAG must consider all available valid evidence that demonstrates the learner's progress towards the learning aims of the qualification. The evidence should be used in conjunction with the member of staff's professional expertise to form a judgement about whether the learner would achieve the unit. All available evidence should be used and the minimum requirement for judging a learner's CAG is that there must be at least one piece of trusted evidence available.

The following forms of evidence should be used to support judgement in English, Maths, ESOL Skills for Life and Portfolio qualifications, where these are available. Guidance on trusted evidence is available on page 22 of [Ofqual's Extraordinary regulatory framework: Vocational and Technical Qualifications, COVID-19 Conditions and Requirements](#).

Sources of Evidence within the Calculated Results Process

Ascentis understands that Centres may not have complete records of assessment and therefore the evidence used by Centres will vary for each learner, for each qualification. Centres must make professional judgements on whether the learner has taken sufficient assessment for them to be awarded a valid and fair result.

Different sources of evidence will have different levels of trust applied to them and therefore Ascentis requests that Centres informally rank evidence used to calculate a result from which they believe has the highest level of trust to least. Where evidence provides insufficient trust to determine an outcome, Centres should consider alternative options. This will be for the Centre to decide, dependent on the individual situation of the learner. **ESOL Skills For Life** - For further information on trusted evidence for ESOL, please see the Ascentis website <https://www.ascentis.co.uk/news/the-awarding-of-esol-skills-for-life-award-and-certificates-under-the-exceptional-regulatory-framework-in-summer-2020>.

Trusted evidence that could be used includes, but is not limited to:

- 'Banked assessments' – where any units have already been claimed and externally quality assured by Ascentis.
- Assessments / units completed and internally quality assured, but not externally quality assured by Ascentis.
- Assessments / units completed by learners prior to 21st March, but not internally quality assured.

Less trusted evidence might consist of:

- Previous assessment papers / results or assessment outcomes, for example any re-sitting learners or those who have completed similar qualifications.
- Outcomes of internal Centre assignment tasks.
- Formative or practice assessment / assessment results.
- Participation and performance in skills-based activities.
- Overall learner performance and progress, including level of attendance prior to Centre closure.
- Tutor or Assessor assessment tracking records and individual learning plans.
- Any other records of learner performance over the course of study.

The **minimum evidence threshold** is likely to be at least **one** completed summative assessment, which can be supported by other available forms of formative assessment. It is likely that at least 50% of the qualification's assessments have been completed to allow the Centre to reach a CAG for the qualification overall.

Centres **must NOT** submit CAGs for any learner they would not expect to have taken the assessment during the period 20th March to 31st July 2020.

All evidence used to support judgement of CAGs may be subject to inspection by the awarding organisation and must be retained for at least a 12-month period.

*Please note that Centres must **only use evidence that can be presented to Ascentis** to allow for a calculated result to be issued. This means that paper evidence that is inaccessible due to lockdown restrictions **cannot be used**.*

- Previous Centre-marked attempts at practice tests
- Previous attempts at the live assessment(s)
- Formative assessment results. Formative assessment is defined as assessment undertaken to check learning has taken place and assess progress towards the level. This can be Centre-devised or a commercially available product. This does **not** include initial and diagnostic assessment (see below).
- Any other learner work towards the qualification (i.e. work they have independently undertaken in class or at home)
- Learner work demonstrating the skills assessed by these qualifications that has been completed in support of another qualification learning aim.

Results of initial and diagnostic assessment can be used but only in the following ways:

- As a benchmark to gauge progress made towards the unit requirements by the learner
- Where this provides evidence that the learner had already met one or more of the unit's assessed requirements at the point at which the initial / diagnostic assessment was taken.

- Formative assessment results. Formative assessment is defined as assessment undertaken to check learning has taken place and assess progress towards the level.
- Any other learner work towards the qualification (i.e. work they have independently undertaken in class or at home)
- Learner work demonstrating the skills assessed by these qualifications that has been completed in support of another qualification learning aim.

Other forms of evidence may be acceptable, but the Centre must discuss these with Ascentis before judging CAGs.

It is acknowledged that these forms of evidence would not normally be considered in assessing these qualifications. It is also acknowledged that available evidence may only show partial achievement. Therefore, tutors/assessors will need to exercise judgement and discretion in reaching decisions about which learners would have achieved or not achieved. This includes a judgement where learning has been disrupted about whether the candidate would have achieved had they completed the full programme of learning.

Centres should bear in mind the learner's progression aim when providing an 'achieve' CAG for a learner and that this means they believe that the learner would be able to progress to the next level or operate in an appropriate employment setting in respect of the skills that will be certificated. Please refer to [Guidance for Heads of Centre, Heads of Department and teachers on objectivity in grading and ranking](#) document.

Guidance for Tutors/Assessors Judging Learners' CAGs

A learner's CAG should only be judged by tutors/assessors with direct experience of teaching that learner in the subject and unit for which the CAG is being judged.

Where more than one tutor/assessor is responsible for teaching a learner in a unit, they should work together to reach a judgement about the learner's CAG.

Where more than one tutor/assessor is responsible for teaching a subject/unit at a particular level, they should work together to standardise their judgement in the way described below.

Judgements must be made in an impartial, balanced and unbiased way, such that the assessment grades are based on evidence of attainment and avoid bias as far as is possible, so that learners are not systematically advantaged/disadvantaged by having/not having a protected characteristic or any other factor (e.g. appearance, social background or special educational needs) that does not relate to their knowledge, skills or abilities in relation to the qualification. Protected characteristics are defined in the 2010 Equality Act as; age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Preparation for Judging CAGs

Tutors/assessors should ensure they are familiar with:

- The guidance on the process.
- The standards for the subject and level being assessed
- The awarding organisation's relevant assessment criteria

Only learners affected by the Covid-19 disruption should have CAGs submitted. This is defined as:

All learners who they would expect to have taken the exam between 21 March and 31 July.

Centres must NOT submit CAGs for any learner they would not expect to have taken the exam / assessment during this period.

Tutors/assessors should identify eligible learners before starting the process of judging learner CAGs.

The Tutor/Assessor should consider each eligible learner in turn. For each learner whose CAG is being judged, the tutor/assessor should consider:

- At least one piece of valid, trusted evidence that demonstrates the learner's progress towards the assessment requirements of the unit.
- The assessment requirements of the unit
- Assessment Criteria for the unit being considered
- Their knowledge of the learner's ability
- Any permitted support that would have been given to that learner in completing the assessment
- Any reasonable adjustment that would have been made to the assessment for that learner in respect of a disability.

Only learners affected by the Covid-19 disruption should have CAGs submitted. This is defined as:

All learners who they would expect to have achieved their qualification between 21 March and 31 July.

Centres must NOT submit CAGs for any learner they would not expect to have achieved their qualification during this period.

Tutors/assessors should identify eligible learners before starting the process of judging learner CAGs.

The tutor/assessor should consider each eligible learner in turn. For each learner whose CAG is being judged, the tutor/assessor should ensure that the learner meets the following Minimum Threshold of Requirements:

- All practical skill elements of the qualification have been completed and assessed either through real life experience or through a simulation if the qualification specification allows for this.
- Mandatory or core units that form a basis of the qualification specification must have been completed and assessed.
- Typically, a minimum of 50% of the required units to meet the qualification specification have been assessed and verified through the Internal Quality Assurance process.
- External Quality Assurance must have taken place for evidence already assessed and Internally Quality Assured (This can still be arranged remotely in conjunction with your External Quality Assurer)

The tutor/assessor should also take into consideration the following for any learners that meet the Minimum Threshold of Requirements:

- Assessment Criteria for the unit being considered
- Their knowledge of the learner's ability
- Any permitted support that would have been given to that learner in completing the assessment
- Any reasonable adjustment that would have been made to the assessment for that learner in respect of a disability.

The tutor/assessor should also use their professional expertise to reach a considered judgement about whether that learner would have achieved or whether the learner would have not achieved the unit had they taken the assessment in the usual way.

The evidence used may only show partial achievement of the unit's requirements. In reaching a decision about each learner's unit CAG, tutors/assessors must make a judgement that includes a reasonable consideration of whether the learner would have achieved had the scheduled programme of learning taken place and been completed by the learner.

In some cases, it may be considered that a learner would have been on the borderline between achieving and not achieving the assessment, but the tutor/assessor may feel unable to reach a definitive judgement. In such cases, it is recommended that;

- where possible, such cases are discussed as part of standardisation
- particular attention is paid to the qualification specification/assessment criteria
- comparison is made between the evidence for that learner and evidence considered for other learners felt to be around the borderline but where it has been possible to reach an 'achieve'.

It is further recommended that borderline decisions could be noted and reconsidered as part of the Centre's QA check in relation to the overall profile of the CAGs for the unit relative to expectations based on an equivalent historic period.

The tutor/assessor's judgement for each learner should be recorded and the evidence retained in line with instructions provided.

Standardisation

Where there is more than one tutor/assessor responsible for delivering a unit within the Centre and involved in judging CAGs for that unit then these tutors/assessors must work together to standardise their judgements.

At the start of the process, tutors/assessors should individually consider an initial sample of learners and make provisional judgements about whether each would achieve or not achieve. Any learners who are felt to be on the borderline of achieve and not achieve should be noted. Before judging any further CAGs, the tutors/assessors should collaborate to discuss and compare their CAGs, the evidence used, and the judgement applied and reach agreement about the characteristics of achieve and not achieve learners.

As a result of this process, judgements reached about the initial sample of learners may be revisited.

The tutors/assessors should then complete judgement for all learners but may wish to discuss any borderline decisions with colleagues as required.

Completing the CAGs judgement process

When CAGs have been judged for all learners for a particular unit within an individual Centre, the following should be recorded for each unit:

- a) Total number of learners for whom a CAG has been judged
- b) Total number for whom an 'achieve' is recommended
- c) The types of evidence used to support the process.

The CAGs for each learner and the information above should be passed to the Head of Centre for checking and submission to Ascentis.

The IQA/Standardisation record must be completed and returned to Ascentis with your submission for CAGs. All standardisation minutes must be retained by the Centre.

Role of the Head of Centre

The Centre assessment process must be overseen and signed off by the Head of Centre.

The Head of Centre's responsibilities are to ensure:

- Only staff who have taught the learner whose provisional unit result is being judged are involved in judging that learner's result.
- All of those who are judging CAGs are briefed on the process as outlined in this document, and are familiar with the requirements of this document and associated materials to support the process (i.e. the relevant qualification standards for the subject and level being judged and the achievement criteria for that subject and level).
- That there is sufficient valid evidence available to underpin the judgements to be made by tutors/assessors before any CAGs are judged.
- That tutor/assessor judgement takes into account any reasonable adjustment that would be made to the assessment in respect of a learner with a disability.
- That judgements are evidence-based and as far as possible, free of any bias in respect of any candidate with a protected characteristic or any other factor (for example character, appearance, social background or special educational needs) that does not relate to their knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject.
- That as far as possible, where more than one member of staff is involved in teaching an individual learner for any unit, that these members of staff work together to agree the CAG.
- Where more than one member of staff are responsible for teaching any unit that these staff.

CAGs must not be submitted based on judgements made by staff other than those who have taught the learner the unit for which the CAG is submitted.

CAGs must not be submitted for any learner where there is no valid evidence on which to base the judgement.

Once the process has been completed, the Head of Centre must sign off a single submission covering all learners who's CAGs they plan to submit. This must be a single submission covering all units that the Centre intends to submit at all levels). Where possible, **submissions should be submitted in a single batch and not be staggered**. Sign off is in the form of a declaration that the process has been followed in full.

The Head of Centre will need to consider that where the following applies, adaption or delay may need to be considered:

- No suitably qualified member of staff is available who has taught any learner whose unit result is being estimated.
- No evidence is available to support judgement of an estimated result for any learner.

Results must not be estimated and submitted based on judgements made by staff other than those who have taught the learner the subject for which the result is estimated. Results must not be estimated and submitted where there is no valid evidence on which to base the judgement. Once the process of estimation has been completed, the Head of Centre will sign off for all cohorts of learners in a single declaration, whose results they plan to Calculate. This can be found on the Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) Record Form'.

Checking the Submission

This process covers any learner assessments that would have taken place between March 21st and July 31st 2020, and any learner expected to complete their Portfolio Qualification before 31st July 2020.

As part of a final sense check ahead of submitting CAGs to Ascentis, the Head of Centre must oversee a comparison between:

- the number of CAGs submitted for each unit and
- the number of results they submitted for each unit for an equivalent historic period (e.g. March 21st – July 31st, 2019). Approximate figures may be used where it is not possible to generate exact figures.

Any variance between the two should be accounted for any unit as part of the submission.

The Head of Centre should oversee a sense check comparing the numbers and proportions of achieve and not achieve CAGs for each unit, with expectations about how each cohort of learners would perform under normal circumstances. A comparison with Centre records for an equivalent period of time (e.g. 21st March – 31st July 2019) should be used for this. The extent of the similarity should be noted and known factors to account for this fed back to Ascentis as part of the submission.

Submission of Centre Assessment Record Form and Results to QuartzWeb.

The **Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) Record Forms** must be fully completed and submitted to Ascentis by email to qualityassurance@ascentis.co.uk.

The results must be uploaded to QuartzWeb for all learners you wish to claim for under the ERF.

Results and **Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) Record Forms** must be submitted from Wednesday 10th June and **no later than** Friday 10th July 2020.

Late Submissions

Dependent on the individual circumstance and date of submission after the deadline submission date, Ascentis must report details of this to the Regulator to determine the appropriate next step. Both Ascentis and Centres have the responsibility to prevent the disadvantaging of learners by timely submitting their calculated grades to Ascentis to allow the required Quality Assurance processes to take place. Ascentis will issue a late submission application form to be used by Centres in these circumstances in due course.

Policy on No Response

A pragmatic approach will be taken regarding Centres who are not able to complete the grade calculation process due to the COVID-19 disruption. Ascentis supports an open dialogue with its Centres to determine the practicability of the Centre in completing the grade calculate process to the required standard. Where a Centre refuses to work with Ascentis to support learners in obtaining their results, or where there are substantial cause for concern regarding a Centre's ability to complete the due process, Ascentis will promptly report this to the Regulator as required.

Timeline

1. Ascentis issues guidance on 'Ascentis Vocational Qualifications Awarding Summer 2020 Guidance - Extraordinary Regulatory Framework'

Friday 29th May



2. Centre to determine if they will be claiming via the Extraordinary Regulatory Framework (ERF). Ensure all learners registered via QuartzWeb

by Monday 15th June



3. Centre to decide eligible learners and collate evidence to support the Centre Assessment Grade (CAG)

From Monday 1st June



4. Ascentis issue the Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) Record Form & Guidance on results submission to QuartzWeb

Wednesday 3rd June



5. Centre Webinars planned:

Wednesday 3rd June 10-11am

Thursday 4th June 9.30-10.30am

Monday 8th June 3-4pm



6. Centre submits results & Assessment Grade (CAG) Record

between Wednesday 10th June and Friday 10th July



7. Ascentis Quality Assurance conducted & Centre evidence reviewed

by Friday 31st July



8. Ascentis issues certificates

by Monday 31st August 2020

Ascentis Quality Assurance

We will then Quality Assure CAGs that are submitted to us. To generate calculated results, and as part of the quality assurance process we may review evidence we already hold. This may include data and information about each Centre, for example, risk profiles, Centre visit information, and records of any investigations.

The Quality Assurance process and the overall check on outcomes are both important parts of the process, because they ensure that the results awarded will be fair and reliable. Therefore, we will ensure that we use at least one source of trusted evidence along with a sufficiently robust basis for quality assurance. More detail about what Ofqual consider the most reliable evidence can be found in [Ofqual's Consultation Document](#).

In cases where there is little or no banked unit data, or where CAGs are not possible, and/or there is little opportunity or evidence to support the generation of CAGs or the quality assurance process, we may determine that this is below the Minimum Evidential Threshold. In these cases, we expect it will not be possible to calculate a result. Our expectation is that in these circumstances, learners affected will be offered an adapted assessment wherever possible, or will have to wait until assessments can be rescheduled.

Where Ascentis identify any concerns with a Centre's submission for any reason, the submission would then be queried with the Centre to ask for supporting evidence to be supplied to us, or request an amendment to the submitted information. Once we have performed our internal checks, we may need to contact you to collect more evidence to validate your calculations and you should be prepared to provide this information.

We may also request information on your Centre's management and information systems, internal resources, assessment and internal quality assurance processes. When making decisions about calculated grades you should consider the evidence below. You must also consider learners with special considerations and ensure that the grade submitted is reflective of any special arrangements that would have been put in place. It is also your responsibility to ensure that no unconscious bias has been introduced to the process that may disadvantage learners who have protected characteristics.

It is important you retain information on how you arrived at your calculated grade as this may be requested during our quality assurance checks. The more information you can provide to justify your marks will enable us to sufficiently verify your decisions.

Ascentis will perform an overall check of outcomes compared to previous years and other data to make sure that they are in line with expectations at an Awarding Organisation level, prior to issuing results.

Adaption

It may not be possible to issue calculated results for some vocational qualifications because such results cannot be awarded reliably or safely. This is likely to be the case for some qualifications that are used to signal occupational competence, and where such competence cannot be evidenced using the usual, expected methods at present.

Where this is the case, we will consider whether we are able to suitably and manageably adapt our assessments and related processes in order that learners might complete their qualifications. For some qualifications, a calculated result approach would not be suitable, in particular those that are designed to signal occupational or professional or regulated competence (including licence to practise). Providing a result that signals competency that has not been evidenced to the usual expected standards creates risks. It could mean that a learner does not possess the skills required by the role to which the qualification relates, or does not meet the standards set by professional bodies or in regulations. There might also be cases where it is not possible to generate a CAG. In these cases, the principal mitigation is for us to adapt the assessments.

These include changing the way in which assessments are delivered, for example;

- carrying out an assessment remotely rather than face-to-face
- adapting assessment methods, for example, by using a practical simulation in place of an observation, or professional discussion in place of a practical demonstration
- waiving or adjusting work experience or placement requirements, for example, allowing learners to undertake a shorter period of work experience.

We will give due regard to any specific requirements put in place by professional and sector bodies when making judgements about adaptations. We will ensure, as far as possible, that any adaptations minimise any disadvantage to learners with special education needs or a protected characteristic. However, where we can offer an adapted assessment but only in a way that, despite our best efforts, does disadvantage some learners, we will still offer the adapted assessment.

This is in line with the overall aim of the government's policy of ensuring that as many learners as possible are provided with results. In making provisions for adaptations, Ascentis will take all reasonable steps to minimise risks to validity by ensuring that coverage of the key areas of the construct of the qualification is retained within any adapted assessment. In doing so, we will act within the limits of our capacity and capability.

Where we do not reasonably consider that any adaptations we make will result in an assessment that provides valid and reliable results, we will not seek to provide such an assessment. We will instead delay the provision of assessments until a specified date.

All adaptations to any qualifications must be reviewed and approved by Ascentis in advance via qualityassurance@ascentis.co.uk

Delay

Our overall aim is to provide as many learners with sufficiently valid and reliable results this summer as possible, and in order to minimise the burden on ourselves, Centres and learners, delaying or re-scheduling assessments should be the option of last resort or where this has been stipulated by professional and sector bodies.

Results

We expect the results of our qualifications awarded under the ERF to be issued no later than 31st August.

We will process results upon receipt of the required Quality Assurance checks under the ERF within 4 weeks. Within this time, results and e-certificates will be available to view and download in QuartzWeb.

Once we return to the office, we will send out hard copy certificates if this is requested.

Please note that CAGs are provisional until certificates are issued. Centres must not communicate provisional results to learners until certificates have been issued by Ascentis.

Appeals and complaints

Ascentis will allow appeals on the basis that it has used incorrect information or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly in arriving at a calculated result.

The regulators have confirmed that there should not be an opportunity for learners to challenge their Centre Assessment Grade through an appeal. However, there may be rare cases where a learner considers a Centre Assessment Grade was demonstrably affected by bias or discrimination.

If there was evidence of actual bias, which the student could provide, then this could be investigated. Evidence of bias could, regardless of any appeal facility, be raised by a student with their Centre as a complaint that would need to be investigated by the Centre. Similarly, evidence of bias could be presented to Ascentis, who would then investigate the matter as alleged malpractice. Ascentis would be able to consider correcting results where an investigation concludes that these are incorrect as a result of malpractice or maladministration.

Centres can make an appeal to Ascentis on the grounds that we used the wrong data when calculating grades, and/or incorrectly communicated the grades calculated. An appeal brought on the grounds that a Centre made an error in the data it submitted to Ascentis must be supported by clear evidence that an error had been made by the Centre.

Please refer to the Ascentis Appeals Policy and to the Ascentis Complaints Policy and Procedure for timescales and contact information. These can be found in the [login section of the Ascentis Website](#).

Malpractice and maladministration

Ascentis will investigate any alleged maladministration / malpractice during the summer 2020 results process. This includes a review of irregularities such as late learner registrations, increased volumes / achievement as well as investigating where adaptations have been applied by a centre without approval to do so.

Ascentis will follow its usual policy and procedures in investigating alleged malpractice or maladministration.

Please also refer to the Ofqual document: 'Guidance for Heads of Centre, Heads of Department and teachers on objectivity in grading and ranking', which can be found [here](#).

Appendix (i) Centre Assessment Grades Guidance on Completing Record Forms Centres Assessment Grades ERF Report (Guidance)

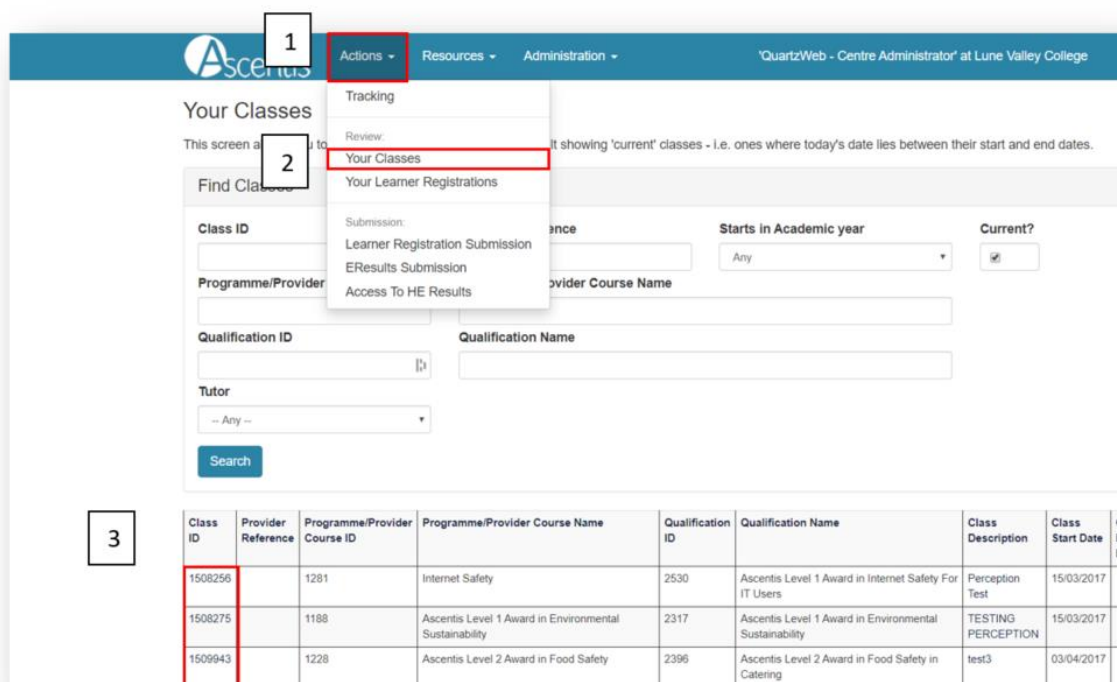
As part of the Extraordinary Regulatory Framework, all centres who claim for a Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) need to follow the below steps for documenting the evidence and claiming for relevant learners.

All the relevant staff members involved in the ERF must be aware of this process.

Step 1- Downloading the QuartzWeb ERF Report:

The following report is to be generated for each class where a Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) is to be claimed. This report will then allow centres to document the evidence to support the CAG.

To generate an ERF report, navigate to the relevant class in QuartzWeb via 'Actions' > 'Your Classes' and click the required Class ID:



The screenshot shows the QuartzWeb interface for a Centre Administrator. The 'Actions' menu is open, and 'Your Classes' is selected. The 'Your Classes' table is displayed below the search form.


Class ID	Provider Reference	Programme/Provider Course ID	Programme/Provider Course Name	Qualification ID	Qualification Name	Class Description	Class Start Date	Class End Date
1508256		1281	Internet Safety	2530	Ascentis Level 1 Award in Internet Safety For IT Users	Perception Test	15/03/2017	
1508275		1188	Ascentis Level 1 Award in Environmental Sustainability	2317	Ascentis Level 1 Award in Environmental Sustainability	TESTING PERCEPTION	15/03/2017	
1509943		1228	Ascentis Level 2 Award in Food Safety	2396	Ascentis Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering	test3	03/04/2017	

Once the Class is open, click 'Class Documentation':

The screenshot shows the Ascentis QuartzWeb interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Actions', 'Resources', and 'Administration'. Below this, a dropdown menu is open, showing 'Learner Registrations', 'Unit Registrations', 'Results', and 'Class Documentation' (which is highlighted with a red box). The main header area displays 'Class [1508275] TESTING PERCEPTION' and 'Provider [1236] Lune Valley College'.

Under the 'View Report' section, click the 'ERF Report':

The screenshot shows the 'View Report' section. It contains a list of report names: 'Achievement List - By External Verification Date', 'Attendance list for all Controlled Assessments (including non-paper based SOQs)', 'Attendance list for Paper based SOQ assessments', 'Class Result Slip', 'E-Assessment - Entry List (Usernames)', 'E-Assessment - Printable Entry Slips', 'Enrolment List', 'ERF Report' (highlighted with a red box), and 'Printable Class List'.

This will generate an ERF Report, which will contain details of all the learners within the class. This report can be exported in a number of ways for completion. We suggest using Excel, as this will allow you to enter the relevant information directly to the report. To export the report, click the  icon and select 'Excel':

The screenshot shows the ERF Report export interface. At the top, it says 'To print this report please use the export facility'. Below this, there's a dropdown menu for 'Only show learners' with the value 'Learner, Andy, Learner, Hannah, L'. To the right is a 'View Report' button. Below the dropdown is a list of export options: 'XML file with report data', 'CSV (comma delimited)', 'PDF', 'MHTML (web archive)', 'Excel' (highlighted with a red box), 'TIFF file', and 'Word'. Below the export options, there's a table with learner details.

Learner ID	Forename	Surname	DOB	Status	CAG? (yes/no)	Units completed prior to 20th March 2020	Evidence (List evidence, see guidance for details)
1090595	Andy	Learner	01-01-01	Registered			
1090600	Hannah	Learner	06-01-01	Registered			
1090599	Jack	Learner	05-01-01	Registered			
1090601	James	Learner	07-01-01	Registered			

Step 2- Completing the ERF Report:

Once the ERF Report has been downloaded from QuartzWeb for the relevant class(es), the Tutor/Assessor who taught and assessed the previous work for the learners is now responsible for the Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) process and is required to complete the form for the learners.

Please ensure you read the guidance carefully before completing the report.

Each column must be completed as follows:

1. **CAG?** – Please indicate ‘yes’ if you are claiming for this learner under the ERF. If you state ‘no’, please leave the rest of the columns blank.
2. **Units completed prior to 20th March 2020**
 - a. Please list any units that have been completed prior to 20th March 2020.
 - b. By each unit you must list a number in brackets, this refers to the status of the unit:
 - (1) - ‘Banked assessments’ – where any units have already been claimed and Externally Quality Assured by Ascentis.
 - (2) - Assessments / units completed and Internally Quality Assured, but not Externally Quality Assured by Ascentis.
 - (3) - Assessments / units completed by learners prior to 21st March, but not Internally Quality Assured.
3. **Units due to be completed between 21st March and 31st July 2020**

Please list all the units to be claimed for a Centre Assessment Grade
4. **Evidence to support the Centre Assessment Grade (CAG)**

Please list the evidence that contributes to support this CAG. Please refer to the ‘Sources of Evidence within the Calculated Results Process’, this is documented in the **Ascentis Vocational Qualifications Awarding Summer 2020 Guidance**, which can be found on the Ascentis website.

Example completed ERF report:

ERF Report

Lune Valley College
BayView Campus

Start Date: 07-02-2020

End Date:

Learner ID	Forename	Surname	DOB	Status	CAG? (yes/no)	Units completed prior to 20th March 2020	Units due to be completed between 21st March & 31st	Evidence to support the Centre Assessment Grade (CAG)
1090535	Andy	Learner	01-01-01	Registered	YES	Developing Confidence and Self-Esteem (2), Improving own learning and performance (3), Group and Teamwork Communication Skills (3)	Personal Career Preparation	3 units completed prior to the 20th March. One unit has been assessed and internally verified and two units have been assessed but not internally verified. For the Personal Career Preparation the evidence includes a learner CV, learner worksheets to support this unit and some specific formative tasks the learner has completed after 20th March.
1090600	Hannah	Learner	06-01-01	Registered	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A
1090599	Jack	Learner	05-01-01	Registered	YES	Developing Confidence and Self-Esteem (2), Improving own learning and performance (3), Group and Teamwork Communication Skills (3)	Personal Career Preparation	3 units completed prior to the 20th March. Two units have been assessed and internally verified and the third unit has been assessed but not internally verified. For the Personal Career Preparation the evidence includes a learner CV, learner worksheets to support this unit and some specific formative tasks the learner has completed after 20th March.
1090601	James	Learner	07-01-01	Registered	YES	Developing Confidence and Self-Esteem (3), Improving own learning and performance (3), Group and Teamwork Communication Skills (3)	Personal Career Preparation	3 units completed prior to the 20th March. The 3 units have been assessed but not internally verified. For the Personal Career Preparation the evidence includes a learner CV, learner worksheets to support this unit and some specific formative tasks the learner has completed after 20th March.
1090598	Jo	Learner	04-01-01	Registered	YES	Developing Confidence and Self-Esteem (2), Improving own learning and performance (3), Group and Teamwork Communication Skills (3)	Personal Career Preparation	3 units completed prior to the 20th March. One unit has been assessed and internally verified and two units have been assessed but not internally verified. For the Personal Career Preparation the evidence includes a learner CV, learner worksheets to support this unit and some specific formative tasks the learner has completed after 20th March.
1090597	Joanne	Learner	03-01-01	Registered	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A
1090596	Louise	Learner	02-01-01	Registered	YES	Developing Confidence and Self-Esteem (2), Improving own learning and performance (3), Group and Teamwork Communication Skills (3)	Personal Career Preparation	3 units completed prior to the 20th March. One unit has been assessed and internally verified and two units have been assessed but not internally verified. For the Personal Career Preparation the evidence includes a learner CV, learner worksheets to support this unit and some specific formative tasks the learner has completed after 20th March.
Total Number of Students : 7								

Claims for Fully Completed Assessments, where a learner has fully completed the assessment/unit, centres must continue to claim for these as normal. This only applies where all of the unit's learning outcomes and assessment criteria has been through the full internal centre quality assurance process. This includes assessment and internal quality assurance. This will aid Ascentis in issuing calculated results, as well as ensuring learners have the best chance of obtaining a correct and valid result.

IQA/Standardisation Record (Guidance)

Step 3 – Completion of the IQA/Standardisation Record:

All Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs) must be subject to internal quality checks within the centre.

Please complete the 'IQA/Standardisation Record' in full. **One form** must be completed per Qualification Area (e.g. all Employability qualifications) being claimed by the centre. All boxes can be expanded to give more details. This must be completed in line with the guidance provided in our **Ascentis Vocational Qualifications Awarding Summer 2020 Guidance**, which is available on the Ascentis website.

Centre name - Please list the centre name as it appears on QuartzWeb.

Qualification(s) - Please list all qualification(s) for which a CAG is being submitted

Class ID – Please list the class IDs (which can be found on the ERF report). In the **Number of claims** column, please specify the number of claims for each class.

Sampling/standardisation method - Details of the standardisation used to check validity and accuracy of Centre Assessments Grades (CAG) across this qualification and members of staff involved in this process.

Do results follow a similar pattern to previous years across the qualification - Confirm that your results follow a similar pattern/trend to that of previous years for this qualification. Provide rationale if there are any diversions from usual patterns

List the key staff members involved in the process and their roles – Please include the names of all the staff involved in the calculation of Centre Assessment Grades listed in this report. Where applicable, please provide further details of their roles/experience of teaching the units to the learners in question.

Provide rationale for how CAGs will be valid and fulfil qualification/unit requirements - Provide details of how you have reached your CAGs for this cohort of learners and how you have assured yourself that each result is a fair and valid representation of what the learners would have achieved, if they had the opportunity to complete their qualification.

Outline key risks regarding the process and Centre mitigations. - Please outline any risks you have encountered or potential risks identified, and what your centre has put in place to mitigate these risks. For example, this could relate to falsified claims or clerical errors.

Other Supporting Evidence – Please include any other supporting evidence you feel appropriate to support your submission.

IQA declaration – The statements in this declaration must all be agreed to before we can process any centre assessment grades for your centre. Please check through each statement and if you agree that each step has been completed, then the boxes should be ticked. The IQA(s) must sign and date the declaration.

Step 4 – Head of Centre Declaration:

The Head of Centre is responsible for reading the declaration on the last page of the IQA/Standardisation Record.

This declaration must be signed by the Head of Centre to confirm that all units claimed through CAGs have been checked and agreed by the Head of Centre before claims can be Quality Assured and processed by Ascentis.

Step 5 – Submission of documentation and uploading results to QuartzWeb:

Submission of results under the Extraordinary Regulatory Framework can be submitted from the **10th June**. The submission period will remain open for one month to allow all staff to read the appropriate communications and consider all of the requirements. All results **must be submitted** by the closing deadline of **10th July 2020**.

Where possible, submissions should be submitted in a single batch for the centre and not be staggered.

1. Please email the Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) Record Forms to Ascentis in a Zipped File, with all contained files clearly named. This should be emailed to qualityassurance@ascentis.co.uk and will include:
 - a. The 'ERF Report' for each class you are wanting to claim under the ERF
 - b. The corresponding 'IQA/Standardisation Record' to cover each qualification area
2. Please also upload your results as you normally would through QuartzWeb, promptly after submitting the ERF forms via email. This includes selecting 'achieved' by each unit the centre is claiming for and includes all units (whether these are CAGs or completed prior to the 20th March 2020)

Step 6 & 7 Conducted by Ascentis

Step 6:

Once Ascentis have received the information requested in step 5, this will be reviewed and our Quality Assurance process will take place. Quality Assurance and the overall check on outcomes are both important parts of the process, because they ensure that the results awarded will be fair and reliable. Therefore, we will ensure that we use at least one source of trusted evidence along with a sufficiently robust basis for Quality Assurance. To generate calculated results, and as part of the Quality Assurance process we may review evidence we already hold. This may include information held about each Centre e.g. risk profiles, Centre visit information, and records of any Centre issues.

We may also request learner evidence from the Centre to support the Centre Assessment Grade and the overall Quality Assurance check.

Step 7:

Following the required Quality Assurance Checks, we will process results upon receipt of the required Quality Assurance checks under the ERF within 4 weeks.

We expect the results of our qualifications awarded under the ERF to be issued no later than 31st August.

Appendix (ii)

Extraordinary Regulatory Framework

IQ/Standardisation Record

Centre Name	
Qualification title	

Class IDs included in this report	Number of claims through the ERF

Details of Internal Quality Assurance:

Sampling/Standardisation method - <i>Details of the standardisation used to check validity and accuracy of Centre Assessments Grades (CAGs), across this qualification</i>

Do results follow a similar pattern to previous years across the qualification? Are these comparable with the learners' previous achievements? Provide rationale if there are any diversions from usual patterns below:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

List the key staff members involved in the process and their roles.	
Provide rationale for how CAGs will be valid and fulfil qualification/unit requirements.	
Outline key risks regarding the process and Centre mitigations.	

Other Supporting Evidence:

Declaration

(Please check the box next to each statement to confirm each step has been completed)

I can confirm that:

- All results and learner details have been checked and are correct ☐
- Where more than one Tutor/Assessor was responsible for teaching or assessing a unit or qualification at a particular level, they worked together to standardise their judgement ☐
- I am confident the CAGs honestly and fairly represent learner achievement, if they had completed their assessments as planned ☐
- The CAGs for these learners are submitted by staff members who have experience of teaching the specific units to these learners ☐
- Relevant evidence and standardisation notes/minutes have been retained to support the quality assurance process and may be subject to audit by Ascentis at a later date ☐
- Quality assurance of the overall calculated result: comparison to historic centre outcomes, entries and certification data has been carried out ☐

IQA name(s):	Signature(s):	Date:

Head of Centre Declaration

I confirm that these Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs) have been checked for accuracy and (where possible) reviewed by a second member of staff. These CAGs are accurate and represent the objective and professional judgements made by my staff, and the entries are appropriate for each learner. Having reviewed the relevant processes and data, I am confident the CAGs honestly and fairly represent results the learners would have achieved, had their assessments been completed as planned. These CAGs have not been disclosed to either the learners or their parents/guardians. I understand that Ascentis will conduct a quality assurance review to consider whether the profile of results submitted is substantially different from what might have been expected, based on the Centre's historical results and prior attainment of this year's learners. I understand that Ascentis may request further information and/or documentary evidence to support this process. The Centre will retain evidence relating to learner CAGs for 12 months.

Centre Name			
Head of Centre Name			
Signature		Date	