

## Assessment guidance for stakeholders 2020-21

As a result of the national lockdown and COVID-19 restrictions, we have made a number of changes and accommodations to ensure that teaching and learning at Newcastle College can continue. Our priority is to ensure that our learners continue to receive high quality education and support, within a safe environment, providing them the opportunity to achieve their potential and develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to progress onto their next steps.

We would like to offer further information and clarity regarding the assessment process for this academic year. The Government office responsible for regulating qualifications and examinations (ofqual) has now published the arrangements for the awarding of vocational and technical, and other general qualifications other than GCSE's for 2021 (further details can be found [here](#)). Following two separate consultations, it was decided that a 'one size fits all' approach to assessment and awarding is not possible, and therefore qualifications have been separated into 3 distinct categories:

Category A	Category B1	Category B2
<p><b>Qualifications with occupational skills or proficiency assessments</b> e.g. construction, plumbing and electrical qualifications</p> <p> Taken in schools, colleges or other places</p> <p> Assess occupational skills</p>	<p><b>Qualifications most similar to GCSEs and A levels</b> e.g. BTECs and OCR Cambridge Technicals</p> <p> Taken only in schools or colleges</p> <p> Do not assess occupational skills</p>	<p><b>Qualifications not similar to GCSEs or A levels</b> e.g. Functional skills and ESOL Skills for Life</p> <p> Taken in schools, colleges or other places</p> <p> Do not assess occupational skills</p>
<p><b>Your results</b></p> <p> Assessments can continue as normal where possible</p> <p> Assessments may be delayed</p> <p> Assessments can be adapted if needed</p>	<p><b>Your results</b></p> <p> Graded by teacher or lecturer judgement</p> <p> Various sources of evidence used</p> <p> Results no later than for GCSEs and A levels</p>	<p><b>Your results</b></p> <p> Assessments should continue where possible</p> <p> May be awarded using other evidence or judgements</p> <p> Awarding organisations decide the evidence needed</p>

To find out which category a qualification falls into, you can use Ofqual's [Qualification explainer tool](#), or learners can speak directly with their tutors who will be able to offer further guidance.

Once you have identified which category a qualification falls into, you can use the table below to understand how assessment will take place this year.

It is important to note that, regardless of which category a qualification sits in, all assessment decisions this year will be based on actual evidence, and there will be no predicted grading, as was the case last academic year. This means that it is essential that teaching and learning continues as planned and that learners continue to engage with their programmes to ensure they can succeed and meet their potential. For any further guidance, course tutors should be contacted in the first instance.

### **Category A qualifications**

These qualifications will continue to be assessed as normal (where possible) to ensure that learner's skills and competencies can be assessed with a high level of confidence and that sector specific professional standards are being met. For example, most construction and motor vehicle qualifications sit within category A, as it is essential that learners can demonstrate occupational skills and competencies before being permitted to progress into employment.

Where assessment is not able to take place as normal, adaptations may be applied to the assessment method. These adaptations differ for each qualification; details of which are available on the website of each awarding organisation. Course tutors will also share this information with learners to ensure they understand the process.

There may be instances where assessment is not able to take place as planned, and where adaptations are not suitable. In such cases, assessments may need to be delayed. Such delays will be managed on an individual basis, as the circumstances of each are likely to be very different, and the duration of the delays will differ.

### **Category B1 qualifications**

These qualifications will receive a 'Teacher Assessed Grade' (TAG). This means that, where it has not been possible to complete formal assessment, a range of evidence will be used by teachers/tutors to determine the learner's qualification grade. Examples of such evidence include, but are not limited to, coursework, portfolios, professional discussions, logbooks, observations, witness testimonies and homework.

Over the next few weeks, every learner will have a 1:1 meeting scheduled with their tutor to agree what evidence is to be used to generate the TAG. During which learners will be asked to sign a declaration form to state that they understand and agree with the evidence being used and submitted to determine the TAG. Learners will not be assessed at this point, and grades will not be shared until they are published by the awarding organisation.

Until then, learners will be expected to continue their studies and produce as much evidence as is required to support their TAG. This will likely be a combination of assignments and coursework, as well as mock exams. All of which will be shared and explained by course tutors. This will put learners in the best position to achieve the highest grade possible this year.

Please note that the 'currently working at' (CWA) grade and 'teacher assessed grade' (TAG) are different. Learners will be given a 'currently working at' grade as part of their progress review. This is to help them understand how they are performing at that moment in time. At the end of the year, they will receive a 'TAG' grade. This is what they have actually achieved for the year, is assessed by their teacher, and may differ to the CWA.

**Category B2 qualifications**

These qualifications will continue to be assessed as normal (where possible) and learning will continue as normal, working towards your assessments or exams.

There may be instances where assessments and exams cannot be accessed safely. In such cases, there may be an option for these to take place remotely (the details of which will be shared by course tutors). If assessment is not able to take place on campus or remotely, learners may be able to receive a result based on a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG). This will need to be applied for and agreed by the awarding organisation of each qualification.

For instances where the TAG process applies, please refer to category B1 above.