

Qualification assessment adaptation guidance

For the period of:
September 2020 – Summer 2021





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1 Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic caused significant disruption to the summer 2020 assessment series. City & Guilds, working in consultation with regulators and other awarding bodies, adopted several mitigation options to ensure that affected learners received a valid and reliable result for assessments they were unable to sit. These were either to calculate results using centre estimates, adapt assessments or delay them until they could be safely be taken.

For the 2020/21 academic year, we recognise that the ongoing nature of this pandemic will likely cause further disruptions for centres and that the observation of government guidance will provide additional challenges for the administration of assessments. In the first instance centres should plan to, and wherever possible, deliver all assessments in line with the requirements set out in City & Guilds handbooks and assessment materials. Where this is not possible, we are offering possible assessment adaptations for centres delivering our qualifications.

City & Guilds qualifications can lead to progression onto further study, signal occupational competence, or are linked to a licence to practise. As such we need to consider the purpose of the qualification when deciding on whether adaptations are feasible and/or appropriate.

This guidance document sets out the generic guidance for adaptations available for our qualifications and the conditions for their adoption. We have also created sector specific adaptation guidance that will specify which adaptation approaches are permitted for each qualification and may also include some qualification specific adaptation guidance. Sector guidance is available on the [2020-21 Adaptations – Covid-19](#) page of the website and must be read alongside this document.

Centres can only adopt the adaptation approaches specified in the sector guides. Use of any unauthorised adaptations would constitute malpractice.

It is very important if you have any queries about whether an adaptation approach is appropriate, to contact adaptation.quality@cityandguilds.com before delivering any assessments. This guidance applies to regulated qualifications in the UK and the Republic of Ireland. It does not apply to End-point assessment or international qualifications.

We are committed to developing a process that, as far as possible, will:

- be practical and manageable for centres,
- support the validity and reliability of learner results,
- maintain standards,
- not advantage or disadvantage learners.

Please note that centre assessment grades (CAGs) will not be used to determine results for learners due to take assessments between September 2020 and August 2021. This guidance replaces all previously published guidance on the summer 2020 calculated results process.



2 Adaptation

We are offering possible adaptation approaches to provide flexibility for centres' assessment administration in these unprecedented times. Centres are also reminded that existing flexibility is already built into the assessment conditions of some qualifications. While these do not count as assessment adaptations, they can be utilised to mitigate against logistical issues caused by the current situation.

Assessments should be completed under the standard conditions, as described in the Qualification Handbook and assessment materials, wherever possible. Where not possible, certain assessments can be adapted. Specific detail on which assessments are permitted to be adapted and the controls in place for doing so, will be published in the '2020 - 2021 Adaptations sector-specific guidance' (hereafter referred to as 'sector guides') documents. Centres must ensure that they administer adapted assessments in line with this guidance. Centres must not develop their own adaptation approaches as this could negatively impact learners achieving valid and reliable results in a timely fashion.

We have proposed adaptation for assessments where:

- the validity of the assessment will be maintained,
- assessment scope and rigour remain unchanged,
- it is manageable for centres,
- it does not conflict with identified health and safety or safeguarding issues.

For some qualifications, no mitigation is required as assessments can continue to be administered according to the guidance within the qualification handbook and assessment material.

Assessment adaptations are designed to allow centres flexibility in administering assessments within local/national guidelines, and to support them in responding to short-notice impacts caused by Covid-19. In the event of any large-scale (i.e. national) measures or restrictions being implemented we will advise centres on the appropriate course of action to ensure learners can achieve their results.

2.1 Learners' eligibility

The adaptation approaches within this document are available to learners who

- are undertaking their assessment in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.
- are scheduled to complete their qualification or assessments during the 2020/21 academic year.

For any learners where access arrangements have been agreed (for example a reader or extra time), this should be taken into consideration in any adaptation approaches.

Please note – Learners taking International qualifications and End-point assessments (EPA) are not in scope for these adaptations (unless a regulated qualification forms part of the on-programme content towards an EPA).

2.2 Examples of assessments and possible adaptations

The main types of adaptation available across different types of assessment are described in the following section. Centres must refer to the relevant sector guides for clarification on what adaptations are applicable, as they provide further detail of the specific adaptations that are permitted for individual qualifications and assessments. This document contains general guidance around the type of adaptations found within these guides.



2.2.1 Portfolio-based assessments

Some qualifications require learners to hold portfolios of evidence, which are internally assessed by the centre and externally quality assured by City & Guilds. They are made up of learner evidence, supported by an assessment record identifying the assessment criteria that have been met.

It will be possible to undertake some assessment activities relating to the collection of portfolio evidence remotely, using live video (e.g. for direct observation by the assessor). Section 3 of this document contains information on the range of controls that need to be met when undertaking remote assessment.

The relevant sector guide will indicate the permissible adaptations for each qualification/unit where evidence is collected in a portfolio. The adaptation will be in relation to the collecting or type of evidence. Examples of the types of evidence used in portfolios are described below:

Expert Witness Testimony	The use of additional expert witness testimonies from qualified, occupationally competent individuals to act as evidence in place of, or to supplement, other assessment activities.
Professional Discussion	The use of a professional discussion element to provide evidence of coverage that may not be possible for learners to produce through typical assessment methods at this time.
Simulation	The use of simulation to assess activities that would typically have occurred in a certain (e.g. real work) environment.
Observation	In some instances where direct observation by an assessor is not possible, the number of required observations for assessment may be reduced. In other instances, alternative methods of assessment may be accepted.
Reflective accounts/ statements	The use of reflective accounts or statements that learners can provide to detail activities previously undertaken. The specific guidance will state where retrospective reflection is permitted.

Not all types of evidence are suitable for all qualifications and not all types of evidence will be able to be adapted. Centres must ensure the content and range of qualifications is fully covered and adaptations only used where there is sufficient evidence to make a reliable and valid assessment judgement.

If centres are unsure about whether an adaptation to learner Portfolio evidence is permissible, they must refer to the relevant sector guide.

Using video evidence

For some portfolio-based assessment, video can be used to capture learner evidence. In these instances, centres must:

- test all video or audio equipment before the assessment begins,
- instruct learners to clearly state their full name and learner enrolment number,
- ensure that assessors can clearly view all aspects of learner performance,



- follow the specific guidance in the assessment materials in terms of what specific aspects of assessment are being viewed,
- use a quiet location, free from background noise.

2.2.2 Centre marked assessments

For assessments that are externally set by City & Guilds, internally marked by centres, and completed under specified controlled conditions, adaptations may include:

- **Knowledge-based written assessments**

The use of a range of adaptations has been specified, depending on the qualification, but typically includes a relaxation of control conditions, or an adaptation to the mode of delivering the assessment.

- **Practical assessments**

These should usually be completed without adaptation, however, for some types of qualification where Covid-19 may have restricted or limited assessment opportunities, sector specific guides will contain detailed guidance on the specific adaptations that are permitted.

2.2.3 City & Guilds set and marked Dated exams

Dated exams must be sat on the scheduled day, as scheduled within Walled Garden. However, centres can stagger sittings of the exam throughout that day, to accommodate social distancing requirements, if necessary. Learners who have completed the exam must be kept separately from those yet to sit the exam. They should also be supervised to ensure that they do not discuss the content of the exams, until all learners have sat the exam. This means remaining in exam conditions without access to phones or the internet.

For qualifications where there is more than one exam series in a year, if learners miss one series, they can sit the exam on the next date.

Where this is not the case, centres may be eligible to able to apply for special consideration. Further information will be available in our revised Special Consideration guidance.

2.2.4 City & Guilds set and marked on-demand paper-based exams

If an on-demand exam cannot be sat on the date on the Invigilation Certificate (the attendance register), it can be rescheduled. Exams can usually be moved by up to five working days before or after the exam. If this is not sufficient, the centre should contact City & Guilds for further guidance.

Please note that some of our qualifications have their own Instructions for Conducting Exams (ICE) documents (e.g. Functional Skills) that have been updated to reflect provisions for Covid-19, so centres must also refer to those.



2.3 Work experience / work placements

For those qualifications where work experience and/or work placements are a requirement of the qualification, we are, in some instances, relaxing requirements and occasionally waiving them entirely. Further information will be in the relevant sector guides.

We are therefore expanding the list of acceptable employer involvement and work experience activities to include more remote / recorded activities and encouraging centres to share resources and collaborate, where possible, to enable all learners to meet requirements.

There may be some instances where adjustments are made in the number of hours of work experience required.

Where we do relax a requirement, this does not prevent centres from enabling learners to fully meet the original requirement, where they are able to do so. Work experience/placements are designed to further enrich the learner experience for vocational qualifications.



3 Remote assessment and remote invigilation

Some assessments may be adapted to be administered remotely, provided centres can do so safely and securely.

Depending on the assessment type, they could be remotely assessed or remotely invigilated. These are defined as:

- **Remote assessment** - live practical assessments where the learners are observed and assessed at the same time and not afterwards; OR live knowledge assessments where learners are supervised such as centre marked questions and knowledge tasks within an assignment.
- **Remote invigilation** - live or post hoc supervision of a learner completing assessment tasks under specified controlled conditions where the invigilator is not the assessor, which are assessed afterwards.

Where assessments are undertaken remotely, all assessment requirements (as specified in the relevant qualification and assessment material) must be met, to maintain their validity, reliability, and security. This includes the specified level of control and all assessor and IQA requirements.

There are three different levels of control for administering assessments, which must be adhered to when undertaking them remotely:

- invigilated (invigilator present, exam conditions)
- supervised conditions (assessor present)
- unsupervised conditions.

Centres must ensure learners are prepared for the assessment and have access to all the equipment required before the assessment takes place.

3.1 Assessment control levels

The levels of control for each assessment type are identified below. The sector guides will indicate what type of adaptation (if any) is permitted for the assessments within qualifications:

Assessment type	Control level
Observations (portfolios of evidence and practical tasks)	Supervised
Knowledge assignment/task	Supervised / unsupervised (Dependent on qualification)
Centre marked tests	Supervised
e-volve tests	Invigilated
Paper-based exams	Invigilated



3.2 General requirements for remote assessment

Where remote assessment is permitted, the conditions in this section must be met, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the relevant sector guide.

Assessments can be completed at the learners' workplace or home, dependent on them meeting the minimum technical and equipment requirements. Supervision must be completed by the tutor/assessor.

3.2.1 Security of assessment materials

When assessments are taken remotely, centres must ensure that the security of any assessment materials is maintained. Centres should continue to use their own secure internal systems to administer assessments that allow them to manage learners' ability to access assessment materials.

Centres must ensure not to email any assessment materials or share them in any form that will allow learners to download and save them locally.

3.2.2 Before the assessment

Before the assessment, the centre must ensure learners:

- are prepared for the assessment and have the required equipment/materials,
- have a suitable location for the assessment, that allows them to meet the requirements of the assessment, without interruptions,
- are aware of the conditions that are required for the assessment and the consequences of not meeting them,
- have consent from any other participants in the assessment (e.g. clients or customers).

3.2.3 Starting the assessment

At the start of the assessment assessors must:

- verify the learner's identity,
- check the learner does not have access to any unauthorised materials, including on the walls,
- ask the learner to confirm they are alone (unless where authorised due to approved access arrangements) and will not be interrupted during the assessment.

3.2.4 During the assessment

During the assessment assessors must:

- supervise the learner continuously throughout the assessment,
- where unauthorised materials are identified, the learner must be asked to remove them from the room, before completing the assessment (this must also be reported as potential malpractice),
- ask the learner to explain any interruptions or disruptions,
- stop the assessment if they see anything unsafe,
- ask for clarification if anything is not clear or cannot be seen,
- report any potential instances of learner malpractice.



3.2.5 End of the assessment

At the end of the assessment, the assessor must:

- confirm the end of the assessment,
- ensure that learner work and/or assessor notes have been saved.

3.3 Additional requirements for observations

Where this can be permitted as an alternative to direct observation, the following requirements must be met.

The assessor must:

- agree a plan for the remote observation, in advance of the call to ensure the outcomes are met,
- be able to confidently validate and authenticate the evidence being provided to enable an assessment decision,
- ensure the video is clear and at a distance that the task is clearly visible, and an assessment decision can be made with confidence,
- ensure the video evidence is accompanied by an assessment decision that demonstrates that the video evidence has been assessed and feedback given to the learner,
- ensure the video is of the actual work being carried out in real time and not a synopsis of the work done when completed (if being used as an observation),

3.4 Additional requirements for remotely conducting knowledge assessments

Oral assessments or professional discussion may be conducted via the telephone or via video-conferencing technology such as Zoom or Microsoft teams. Telephone calls must be conducted on a 1:1 basis, whereas video conferencing calls could have several learners. Centres must consider how they will confirm the identity of learners for their chosen method.

Centre-marked question tests can be carried out in a group online call provided the security of assessment is maintained and authentication of evidence is possible. Learners' written or typed responses are sent to the tutor when they have finished and before they leave the video-conferencing call. Tutors may want to consider the number of learners on the online call to ensure that robust, secure invigilation and authentication is feasible. Particular attention should be paid to use of mobile phones, texts, and email sharing of answers between the group. Centres should consider any access requirements an individual learner may have and make appropriate arrangements to ensure they can still be applied. If centres require any support with this, they should contact City & Guilds for further guidance.

If carrying out a professional discussion, the themes or criteria being covered by the professional discussion should be shared with the learner in advance, the exact questions must not be.

Please note – speaking and listening assessments for Functional Skills, Essential Skills and ESOL qualifications have specific guidance documents that have been updated to reflect provisions for Covid-19, so centres must refer to those.



3.5 Recording remote assessments

If centres choose to record remote assessments, the following important information must be included in the recording by the assessor:

- centre name and number,
- name of the assessor,
- assessment name and number,
- name and enrolment number(s) of the learner(s) being assessed,
- location of the participants e.g. workplace or home – avoiding any specific details e.g. address,
- the date of the assessment, the time it begins, and the time it ends.

When recording an assessment, the assessor must agree with all parties that they agree to being recorded, in line with individual privacy policies.

3.6 Online meeting security

Where online meeting software is used for remote assessment, the centre must consider the following:

- If the software operates locked meetings, a password should be set and shared with the learners in advance.
- Reviewing the security and privacy policy for the chosen online meeting software.
- Checking for any security issues or technical issues that may affect your selected online meeting software.
- If opting to record meetings for internal quality audit purposes, ensure that they can be securely stored.
- After the assessment has finished, the assessor is responsible for ending the meeting.

3.7 Remote external quality assurance

Remote assessments administered via online meetings are subject to external quality assurance. In these instances, City & Guilds associates will observe the assessment by attending the online meeting. They may provide verbal feedback following the assessment and will provide a written report of the outcomes.

3.8 Remote Invigilation

Remote invigilation is permitted for some qualifications that use online e-volve tests. It is not available for externally marked paper-based exams. Remote invigilation is only permitted with prior agreement from City & Guilds and is subject to centres meeting our technical, security and quality assurance requirements, as published in 'On-demand e-volve testing at home: Instructions for remote invigilation' document.

We are currently developing our remote invigilation offer for Functional Skills and Essential Skills. We will provide updated information (including which assessments will be eligible) once this is confirmed.



4 Advice

In the interests of good practice, centres might want to consider the following advice on adaptations when planning their assessments for this year:

Selecting units	<p>Some qualifications include centre-assessed units/components. Centres can consider which units can be completed remotely when selecting units this year. In making the decision, it may help to consider what is needed for the assessment, for example:</p> <p>the equipment and resources the learner would need,</p> <p>if other people are required (e.g. clients or participants).</p>
Forms of evidence	<p>For portfolio-based assessment, a range of evidence can be used. Centres may want to review the evidence that could be used for different units for this year, so it can be generated remotely. It may also be possible to use some evidence for more than one unit.</p> <p>Centres should also consider:</p> <p>the learner's preferences (e.g. would they prefer producing written work or joining online meetings / video calls),</p> <p>the technology and other equipment that the learner has access to, either at home or in the workplace.</p>
Planning assessments	<p>Dated exams must be taken at the scheduled date. For other assessments, centres have some choice about when the assessment takes place. Centres might want to consider scheduling some assessments earlier in the year, for example any e-volve tests.</p> <p>For on-demand exams, where centres are scheduling them on specific dates, they should also schedule contingency dates in case there are any issues with the original date.</p> <p>Centres may also want to plan for additional assessment opportunities in case some learners are unavailable (for example due to self-isolating).</p>
Record keeping	<p>Centres must keep clear records of the assessments their learners have completed, along with any mock or formative assessments. Where possible, these should be stored electronically, City & Guilds may ask for copies of these documents as part of the quality assurance or special consideration process.</p> <p>All assessment records must clearly state where assessments have been adapted.</p>



5 Special Consideration

We have revised our Special Consideration policy to address specifically the potential impacts of Covid-19 on learners. This will take into consideration both individual and cohort-level mitigations to those whose performance is impacted, or who are unable to complete the assessments at all.

Alongside revisions of our existing special consideration processes, we will make provisions for instances where learners are unable to complete assessments due to Covid-19. Special consideration provision will use an agreed minimum requirement of available learners' evidence, other completed assessments, and tutor observations to establish an appropriate result. Where this minimum requirement is not met, Special Consideration will not be applied, and learners will need to re-sit assessments.

Further information will be available in the published guidance.

6 Quality assurance

This section provides centre staff with details of the actions they need to follow for quality assurance processes for adapted assessments.

All internal and External Quality Assurance (EQA) processes still apply to the adapted assessments unless specified in the sector-specific guides.

This guidance document must be used in conjunction with the sector guidance documents, as not all qualification assessments can be adapted.

6.1 Assessment

When considering what, if any assessment adaptations are appropriate / required, centre assessors must complete the following steps:

- Review the assessments each learner needs to complete to identify which will require adaptation.
- Record this in the learners' assessment plans.
- In administering assessments, centre assessors must:
 - Review all the evidence, make sound assessment decisions, and clearly record these, for all assessments, whether they are adapted or not.
 - Clearly record which assessments have been adapted and which adaptation approach was taken.

6.2 Internal Quality Assurance

All our standard quality assurance processes continue to apply to adapted assessments and must be followed by centres. Centres must:

- ensure their assessors have identified which assessments for which learners require adaptation.
- apply a risk-based sampling approach on the principles of 'CAMERA' (for more information on 'CAMERA' please find it here [Guidance on Internal Quality Assurance of Qualifications](#));
- select appropriate assessment methods in line with the permissible adaptation requirements.
- standardise assessor decisions across adaptation approaches.
- apply policies, procedures, and legislation to meet City & Guilds and external/regulatory requirements.



- hold assessment records for three years.

6.3 External quality assurance

EQA activity for adapted assessments will usually be carried out remotely. In rare instances, a centre visit may be required, but only in line with published safety guidelines and where it has been agreed with the centre.

EQAs will maintain their usual sampling practice. EQAs will plan, select, and review their sample of your processes and record their findings on a CAR sampling report. As part of their remote sample, EQAs will carry out interviews of learners by phone or via online meetings.

Before completing any assessments, centres must complete the Centre intention form. Details of where adapted assessments have been used and for which learners must be shared with the EQA as part of the preparation for the EQA activity. This information must be included in the CA2 in the Walled Garden, once the CA1 form has been received.

Centres who do not have Direct Claims Status (DCS) or are awaiting their first monitoring activity since gaining approval, cannot claim any results until either:

- the learner work has been reviewed and signed off for certification by the EQA; or
- DCS has been awarded following an EQA activity (where this is available).

6.3.1 Head of centre responsibilities

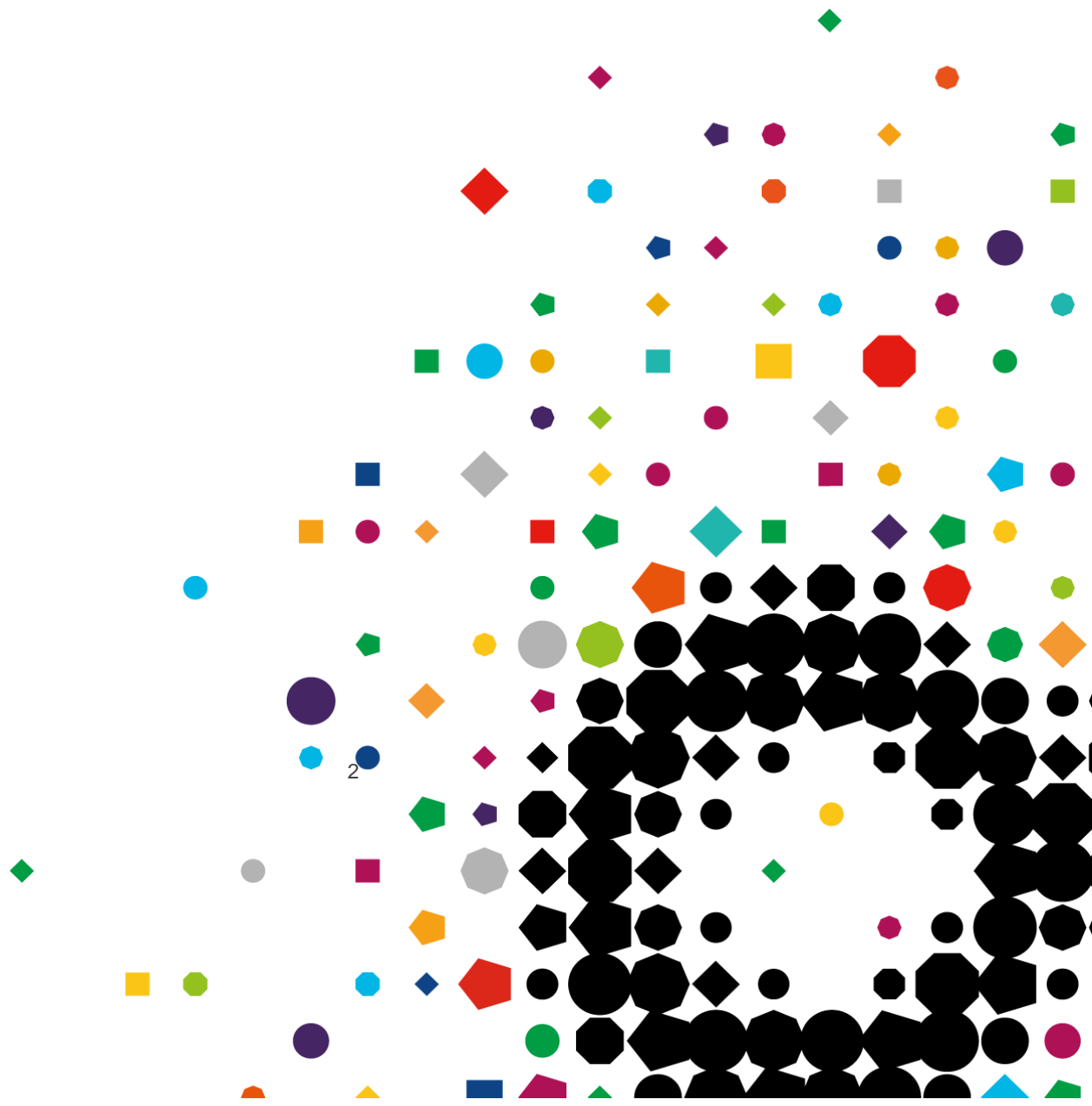
The head of centre must:

- ensure that all assessment and claims submitted meet the criteria set by City & Guilds,
- report any suspected malpractice, please refer to [Managing Cases of Suspected Malpractice](#) for more details.

7. Further advice and guidance

For all queries relating to this guidance and arrangements, email adaptation.quality@cityandguilds.com.

Related documents, Ofqual guidance and updates can be found on our website here <https://www.cityandguilds.com/covid-19>



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