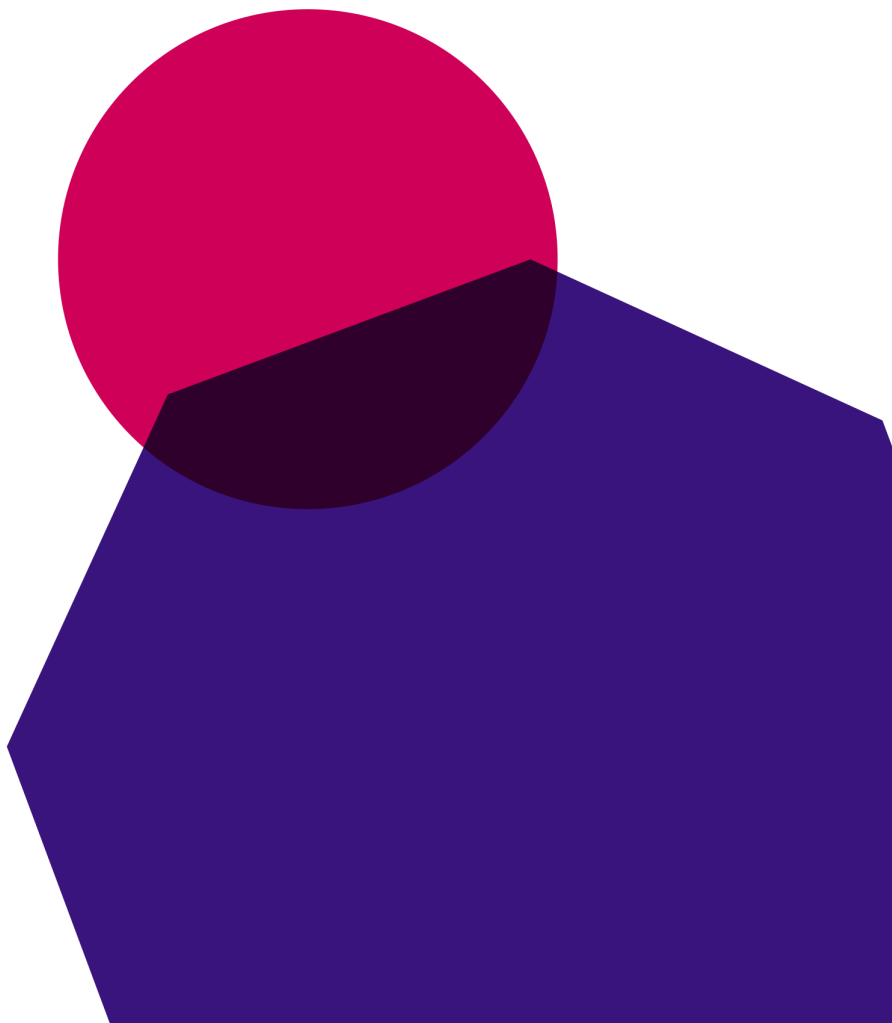


Functional Skills Qualifications - Legacy (3748) and Reformed (4748) Covid-19 Calculated results FAQs

18 June 2020 V2.1

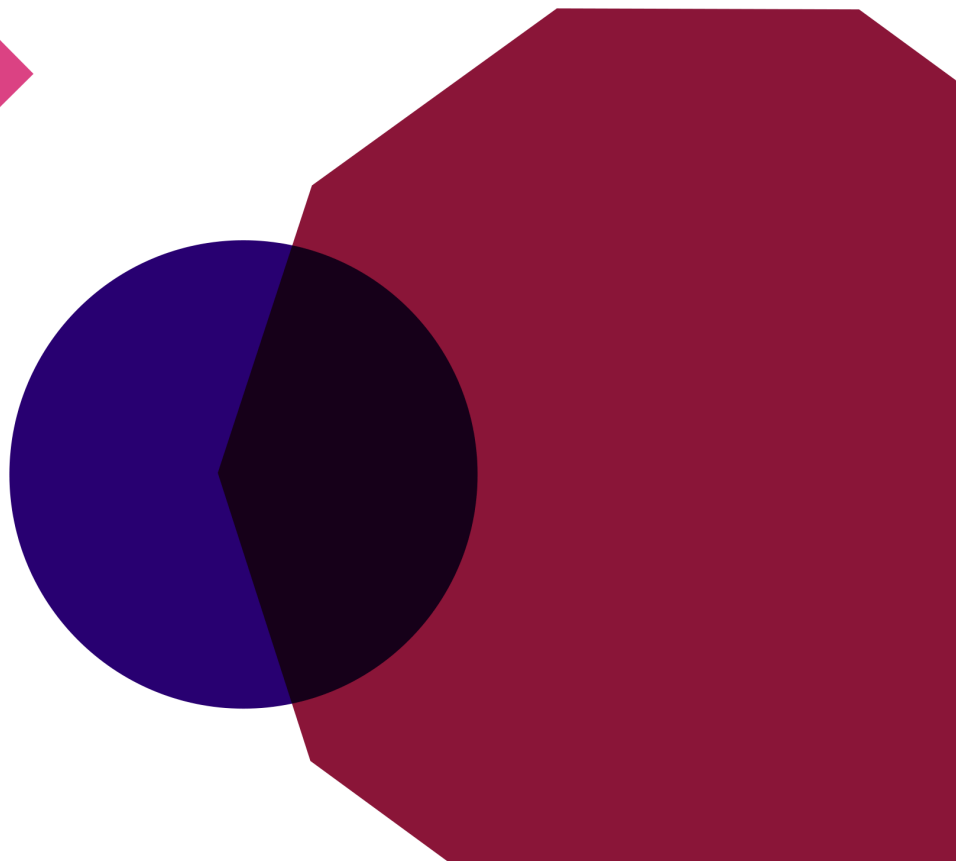


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Useful sources of information



These FAQs should be read alongside the **Information for Heads of Centre, Heads of Department and tutors on the determination of centre assessment grades, in relation to Covid-10 disruption**, and also refer to the **6-step guide** and **pass descriptors** available on the Covid-19 support pages of our website.

Please also listen to our recorded presentation which covers the 6-step guide in more detail and outlines key aspects of determining centre grades. This is available on our Covid-19 support pages.

Candidates and the Covid-19 arrangements

1. Who should use the calculated grades approach?

Candidates who were expecting to take their Functional Skills assessments/tests from 20 March to 31 July whose assessment has been affected by the Covid-19 situation are in scope for this approach.

There is no need for candidates to continue completing Functional skills assessments. Centres should be focussing on submitting centre assessment grades for their learners.

Centres unable to submit calculated grades need to contact us as soon as possible on estimation.quality@cityandguilds.com

2. Can we inform candidates that we are planning to submit their details as part of this process? Many are asking when/how they can sit their tests.

Candidates can be told a centre assessment grade will be submitted for them, instead of them taking an assessment or exam.

Centres can also refer to the 'Letter to learners' on the Functional Skills section of the Covid-19 web pages.

We will not require any further candidate personal details as long as the eligible candidates are already registered with City & Guilds.

In line with the guidance, you are **not permitted** to tell candidates the centre assessment grades you are submitting for them.

3. The current guidance only goes up to 31 July. We are a training provider that delivers year-round learning and assessment. What do we do from 1 August?

Under the current arrangements and plans, we intend to return to delivering assessments in the usual way – on demand on paper/onscreen for L1 and L2 and on demand for Entry level from 1 August and so will not be able to accept any further

calculated grades. We continue to keep this situation under review, work closely with Ofqual and follow government advice and guidance we receive.

Which Functional Skills qualifications the calculated grades approach applies to

4. Does this approach apply to both legacy and reformed Functional Skills?

Yes. Candidates must be registered with City & Guilds by 5 June.

5. Does this approach apply to Entry level as well as Level 1 and Level 2?

Yes. Candidates must be registered with City & Guilds by 5 June

Terminology

6. I have heard a lot of different terms used, calculated grades, centre assessed grades. What's the difference?

A centre assessed grade is the evidence-based, provisional judgement of a candidate's component result which a centre submits to the awarding organisation.

A calculated grade is the confirmed result issued by the Awarding Organisation.

Timeframes for the calculated grades process

7. Is there a timeframe for this process? When does this process start and finish?

The guidance is now available, so you should start the process of determining centre assessment grades as soon as possible.

Please refer to the guidance for further information on submission windows for centre assessment grades. The window for submission of centre assessment grades is 1 – 26 June.

Results will be issued by City & Guilds on 31 July 2020.

Learner eligibility

8. Which learners are eligible or in scope for this approach?

This is covered and defined in more detail in the guidance. It applies to candidates affected by the Covid-19 disruption who you would expect to have taken their assessment or exam from 20 March to 31 July.

Evidence

9. We have a lot of evidence, but it is in staff rooms or computer systems that we can't access at the moment. Can it still be used?

You are required to review all available evidence to make your judgement about each learner and for each component. If evidence is not available for review for any

component, it will not be possible to submit a centre assessment grade for that component for that learner.

10. We have mark books and records tracking individual learners' progress, will this be acceptable evidence on which to make our judgements?

Yes, this type of evidence can be used to support your judgements.

11. What if we aren't able to determine a centre assessment grade for some learners as we have insufficient evidence? How will those learners be affected?

You should carefully consider all available evidence. If you are unsure of the suitability of a piece of evidence, you can contact centresupport@cityandguilds.com for clarification.

If no evidence is available for a candidate for a particular component, unfortunately, you will not be able to submit a centre assessment grade for them for that component.

At submission stage you should ensure that the "No submission" box is selected for these learners.

12. What is trusted/valid evidence?

This is 'evidence which demonstrates the learner's progress towards the learning aims of the component/qualification'. Further detail on suitable sources of evidence can be found in the guidance.

13. What is sufficient evidence for Functional Skills English writing?

Evidence needs to be sufficient to support your professional judgement about a learner's progress towards achieving the component and the centre assessment grade you are submitting had teaching and learning continued and assessments had taken place as planned. The judgement should be an holistic, professional judgement balancing different sources of valid evidence, but with a minimum of one piece of valid evidence per component. This could be drawn from sample/practice papers, classwork/homework drawn from your own and other programmes the learning maybe studying, and other activities which provide you with sufficient information to support your judgement.

14. For writing - if we use a word-processed assignment as evidence, they will have used a spell checker, therefore can this still be used as evidence as a spell checker is not permitted in the reformed qualification?

15.

Spelling forms part of the overall assessment. You need to make an holistic judgement about a learners' overall progress towards achieving the component. Use the pass descriptors to help you for L1 and L2 and consider, using the evidence you have, to support your professional judgement about the learner's ability to achieve the component if teaching and learning and assessments had taken place as planned.

16. What evidence will you accept for the reading component? Would you accept a written piece of text to demonstrate comprehension or does it need to be a past reading paper?

Yes, it can be any candidate work towards the qualification (i.e. work they have independently undertaken in class or at home) or any other qualification they may be working towards as long as it shows progress towards achieving the skills within the component/qualification.

17. We have continued to deliver teaching and learning since lockdown. Can work completed by learners since lockdown be considered as evidence?

Yes. Learning up to the 20 March provides the **main** evidence for grade estimation. However, if there is evidence available from 20 March onwards which supports a centre assessment grade, this can be used alongside other evidence.

However, it is also important to remember the importance of using valid evidence and review the section of the guidance which describes valid evidence in detail.

18. Can evidence be drawn from other parts of the learner's programme, eg their 'on programme' learning as an apprentice?

Yes. In this case, the teacher/tutor setting and marking that piece of work would be expected to contribute to the judgement of the centre assessment grade for that component, for that learner.

19. Are there any time limits on the currency of a piece of evidence?

It should be drawn from the learner's current learning programme.

20. Does the evidence need to be dated, or date stamped, in any way?

Ideally, yes, but if this is not possible, its authenticity should be confirmed as part of the evidence review process.

21. You say that the main evidence will come from before 20 March but we have continued with delivery online and remotely and the majority/all of the evidence comes from post lock down – is it still acceptable?

Evidence needs to be valid. The reason we recommend the main evidence be taken from before lockdown is that it is likely to have been completed in class under the supervision of the teacher. Any work since lockdown may have been completed under different conditions, so may be less reliable. We are relying on your professional opinion.

22. I have read the section on initial and diagnostic assessment in the guidance, but what about the learning resources and tracking tools that form part of some products? Can these be used as evidence?

Yes, these can be used to support a centre's decision where they contain evidence of progress towards achievement of the component/qualification.

23. What do you mean by 'banked' assessment results?

Where the candidate has a result on the Walled Garden, this is classed as a 'banked' assessment result.

24. For English, if the candidate is awarded a centre assessed grade for one or two components, will they have to take the exam later, after August for the remainder?

If these have already been achieved, the results will be stored in our system. If they have a further component to complete and would have expected to take their assessment between 20 March-31 July, a centre assessment grade for this component can be submitted. Work which has been completed, but not yet internally quality assured can also be included in a centre assessment grade. Assessments not planned to be taken between 20 March and 31 July can be completed later when standard delivery resumes.

25. What happens for English where a candidate has completed a component, eg Reading, with another AO?

We will recognise that achievement in the usual way.

26. As reformed FS have only recently been launched, can we include 3748 samples or samples from other AOs' Functional Skills as evidence where we have used them as practice tests?

Yes, but your professional judgement needs to be made against the criteria/content of the assessment your learners are working towards, eg legacy or reformed FS.

27. Could we use some evidence for an ESOL qual to support English Functional Skills?

Evidence needs to demonstrate progress towards achievement of the component/qualification, so would need to map across to Functional Skills subject content clearly, so this would be possible.

28. What sort of commercially-available products could be used to evidence formative assessment?

There are many tools and resources available on the market which are used to support teaching and learning, eg published workbooks, online tools etc. Elements of these may be considered as valid evidence where they include assessment activities (other than IA/DA) which show progress towards achievement of the component/qualification.

Speaking, Listening & Communication/ing

29. Evidence for speaking, listening and communication/ing may be harder to identify and bring together. Can we use things like witness testimonies? What else would be acceptable?

We will accept any valid evidence providing it shows progress towards achievement of the component.

30. Do we have to complete the formal SLC Assessor paperwork?

Where you are using evidence to make a judgement whether a learner would have passed their speaking, listening communication/ing component it is not necessary to complete the Assessor records. It is useful however to use the assessment criteria/subject content statements as laid out on the records form to help you form a judgement about a learner's ability to pass.

31. Do you have pro-forma for a witness statement?

City & Guilds doesn't expect centres to use a specific template, but any witness/expert testimonies need to summarise how the candidate was showing progress towards achievement of the component. It should be signed by the teacher(s) providing it as evidence, dated and be subject to the same internal quality assurance processes. As with all other evidence this should be available for review by City & Guilds and stored securely within the centre for 6 months.

32. We have completed remote SLC. Can we claim these as 'banked' components or use them as evidence?

If the Speaking, Listening and Communication/ing component has been assessed either face to face or remotely and has been quality assured, it can be claimed in the usual way. Once claimed it can be used as a 'banked' component.

If not yet quality assured or claimed this should be arranged as soon as possible.

If not yet quality assured, the evidence can be used to support a centre assessment grade.

33. For legacy 3748 candidates, how will spiky profiles work?

All English qualifications are based on the successful achievement of reading, writing and speaking, listening and communication/ing. Our system will recognise any rules of combination required to issue a certificate for 3748 at the appropriate level.

34. Can we use SLC evidence from a previous level to make a judgement?

You can use any valid evidence which shows progress towards achievement of the qualification you are submitting a centre assessment grade for. If it only shows partial progress, you may need to support with other evidence. Remember also that it is your professional judgement that comes first, so if you feel this is valid evidence, you can use it.

Access arrangements and special considerations

35. We may not have had time to record access arrangements, or learners may not yet have declared these, so we may not yet have agreed these with the AO. What should we do in this case?

It is not necessary to have received approval from City & Guilds. You must work on the assumption that you have access arrangement in place. However, it is important to retain evidence that shows this has been taken into consideration.

Pass descriptors

36. In section 5 of the guidance it says pass descriptors have been provided. Where can we find them?

These are available to download from the Covid-19 website in the Functional Skills section. There is also a link at the top of this document.

37. Are there any pass descriptors for Speaking, Listening & Communication/ing?

No we have not got pass descriptors because SLC is marked internally by the assessor and pass descriptors are used where tests are externally set and marked. We advise you to use the mark schemes, standards/subject

38. I think I have understood that pass descriptors help us to understand that a candidate who is 'minimally competent' can pass, but may be stronger in some areas than others and we should take this into account? Am I right?

Yes.

39. For reformed Functional Skills, when we are making judgements using pass descriptors should we then take performance against new subject content into account, but assume the pass standard of legacy and reformed FS should be about the same?

Yes.

40. Are there pass descriptors for ICT?

Yes these have been uploaded to the website.

41. Are there pass descriptors do we use for Entry Level English, maths and ICT Functional Skills?

No, please use the standards/subject content and mark schemes to support these decisions.

Submission

42. When can we start submitting results?

Centres will be able to submit centre assessment grades between 1-26 June 2020. There is no need for centres to submit evidence. However, this should be retained in the centre for 6 months.

43. Can we bulk upload results?

Yes, this facility is now available . Please see the section on our Covid-19 support pages which provides more support on submitting Centre Assessment Grades [here](#).

44. Do we have to submit results for all learners' centre assessment grades in one submission?

Yes.

45. We are a large centre with many sub-sites and centre numbers, do we have to combine all these into one submission?

Submissions should be made at sub centre level and should reflect registration approaches. Additional guidance on the submission process is now available on our Covid-19 pages [here](#)

46. Does the submission need to be organised by qualification (3748 or 4748), component and level as it says a single submission for each component?

Yes

47. Do we have to submit results for all learners across legacy and reformed functional skills in one submission?

Yes

48. Do we have to submit passes and fails?

You should have calculated a centre assessment grade for all learners, for each component.

For Entry level you are required to submit centre assessment grades for each component for learners who you would normally have expected to take the assessments during this period and who in your judgement would have **passed**.

For levels 1 and 2 you are required to submit centre assessment grades for each component, for all learners who would normally have expected to take the exam during this period. You need to submit **passes for SLC, but both passes and fails for other components**.

49. Under this new guidance we won't be putting candidates in for tests and re-sits, rather just teaching them until they pass, so only probably submitting passes. Is this correct?

You need to submit a centre assessment grade for each component, for each candidate, and this should be the **best result** you would have expected them to achieve if taking the assessment/exam from 20 March to 31 July 2020. You need to submit the grade whether it would have been a pass or a fail for Level 1 or Level 2 reading, writing or mathematics. For speaking, listening and communication at all levels and Entry level, you are only required to submit passes.

50. How quickly will we get results?

Evidence submitted in June and accepted as part of our quality assurance process will be released at the end of July. If we have to request further information results may be issued outside of this timeline

51. Will you be issuing physical certificates?

We are currently issuing e-Certs to all our learners.

52. When will the further administrative guidance for submission be available?

This will be available on the Covid-pages of the City & Guilds website on Friday 29 May.

53. Can candidates choose to take actual exams in August if they are unhappy with their centre assessment grades?

Yes, provided there is a return to normal delivery.

54. Can City & Guilds supply us with the historical data we need to make comparisons with previous cohort performance?

As part of the process drawn up between Ofqual and the awarding organisations it was agreed that centres should use their own historical data rather than be provided with this by their awarding organisation.

Apprentices

55. We have some apprentices who have an end date of July but they will not finish their apprenticeship/course until after that date. Do they have to be submitted as 'fails'? In normal circumstances, these learners would take the exam after the end date on the ILR and be a untimely pass/fail.

If they were expecting to take their FS assessment between 20 March and 31 July, you need to supply a centre assessment grade for them. The grade you submit would be their best attempt whether a pass or a fail.

56. I have an apprentice who needs to achieve level 1 in English and maths as well as attempt the upskill exam at level 2. Are the level 1s to be predicted?

You will need to submit a centre assessed grade for the Level 1 qualification. Currently IFATE have lifted the requirement to attempt the Level 2 exam. See <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/covid-19/recent-announcements/new-end->

[point-assessment-flexibility-for-calculated-functional-skills-qualifications/](#) for more information.

57. What if a learner is on a break in learning, but they are due to return before July 31st? Can they be considered 'in scope' if we have FS evidence for them?

If the learner was expected to complete their assessment between 20 March and 31 July then yes they would be in scope.

58. An EPAO has notified us that if we assess a learner as a pass in calculated English and maths they can be entered through the gateway. The apprentice will know we have graded a pass, you have specifically said we are not to inform anyone of the results, not sure how this will work, your thoughts please?

The requirement to achieve a pass in FS prior to passing through the gateway has been relaxed, however apprentices still need to achieve FS to achieve the apprenticeship. In theory pass/fail candidates could proceed to EPA. Any centre assessment grade would be provisional when submitted

Extension of legacy Functional Skills 3748

59. We understand the final certification date has been extended to 31 December 2020. When will we have more information about the final assessment and exam dates and quality assurance arrangements?

Our previously published last test date was 31 May, for final certification on 31 August 2020. We are currently working a revised last test date and final certification will be 31 December 2020.

Appeals

60. Will learners be able to appeal against their centre assessed grade?

We are working to develop an appeals process for calculated results. Centres will be able to appeal on the grounds that City & Guilds did not use the correct information or follow the correct procedures. It will not possible to appeal the professional judgements of tutors or centres.

Useful sources of information

1. Ofqual guidance on awarding qualifications in summer 2020
2. Ofqual consultation on awarding vocational and technical qualifications in summer 2020
3. Ofqual guidance for Heads of Centre, heads of department and teachers on objectivity in grading and ranking
4. Ofqual rules and guidance for Functional Skills qualifications
5. Ofqual Functional Skills Criteria for English (Legacy)
6. Ofqual Functional Skills Criteria for Mathematics (Legacy)
7. Ofqual Functional Skills Criteria for ICT
8. Department for Education Subject content functional skills: English (Reformed)
9. Department for Education Subject content functional skills: mathematics (Reformed)

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