

## Questions and Answers on T Level Technical Qualification Core Component changes

### 1. What are the changes being made to the Core Component Assessments?

Following receipt of evidence from providers delivering the first T Levels, the Department for Education (DfE) has decided to change the way in which students can take the Core Exam and Employer Set Project at their first attempt. These form part of the Technical Qualification in a T Level.

Ofqual consulted on changing its rules to allow these changes during March to May 2023 and the feedback received from respondents was positive.

From September 2023, students' first attempt at the Core Exam and the Employer Set Project will no longer need to be in the same assessment series (this is already the case for students who re-sit assessments).

Students will still need to sit all the Core Exams in the same assessment series (if more than one exam paper is offered) and, as now, need to attempt both parts of the Core component (the Employer Set Project and Core Exams) by the end of their T Level course to be awarded a Core component grade.

No changes have been made to re-sit arrangements, and students can continue to take the Core Exams and the Employer Set Project in different assessment series when re-sitting.

### 2. Which students are eligible?

The changes apply to all students, meaning those starting courses from September 2023, and those who started in previous years and are already part-way through a course. It is possible some students already on courses will already have taken the Core Exam and Employer Set Project. If this is the case, they will, as currently, be able to retake one or both parts of the Core, together or separately.

### 3. How does this benefit my students?

Evidence from providers delivering the first T Levels has shown that there would be more flexibility to meet students' needs if students were able to take the Core Exams and Employer Set Project in different assessment series from the first attempt. For example, if students enter for the Employer Set Project in the summer assessment

series and Core Exams in the autumn, this may free up more time in the first year for development of practical specialist skills.

This may also provide benefits for students who may feel that attempting both the Core Exams and the Employer Set Project in the same series would not allow them to perform at their best.

#### **4. How will this change how students are entered for the Core assessments?**

Every student still needs to take both the Core Exams and the Employer Set Project by the end of their T Level course and the number of opportunities each year for students to take these assessments has not changed.

Prior to the changes being made to the TQ Core, typically students have taken both the Core Exams and the Employer Set Project in the Summer assessment series of year 1\*. Students could then use the Autumn assessment series of year 2 as a resit opportunity if needed, before taking their Occupational Specialism assessments in the Summer assessment series of year 2. This Summer series would also provide a contingency for any Core resits if needed.

When entering students for assessments, Providers will need to ensure that they have allowed enough time to complete all guided learning hours to prepare students ahead of assessments and that they have considered scheduling of assessments to ensure that there is sufficient contingency for any resits that may be required.

Providers should check assessment scheduling in advance as some resits may take place around the same time as the OS in the summer series of year 2.

\*References to years refers to Academic Years.

#### **5. Is it mandatory for students to sit their Core exams and Core ESP separately?**

No, this option is designed to introduce greater flexibility for Providers in entering students and therefore students can continue to sit their first attempt of the Core exams and Employer Set Project within the same assessment series if Providers consider that this is the best option for their individual students.

#### **6. Can students sit the Core Exam papers in different series?**

No, all Core Exam papers (if there is more than one) must be sat together in the same assessment series as each other, including if a student is retaking. All tasks or activities associated with the Employer Set Project must also be sat together in the same assessment series as each other, including if a student is retaking.

**7. Can students attempt the Core component (either the Core Exams or the Employer Set Project) in Autumn of Academic Year 1\*?**

As a rule, students are not expected to be entered for core assessments (either the Core Exams or the Employer Set Project) in the Autumn assessment series in year one or to be entered for Occupational Specialism assessments in the Summer assessment series in year one\*. This is to give students more opportunity to develop the required knowledge and skills and more opportunity to perform well in the assessments.

Providers are free to design T Level courses to best meet the needs and learning styles of their students and ensure their best chance of success in the assessments. Providers are encouraged to draw on support offered by Awarding Organisations when planning courses, including using Specimen Assessment Materials and exemplification materials and use formative assessment to check whether students should be entered for later assessment series than originally planned.

\*References to years refers to Academic Years.

**8. Will there be more Core assessment series offered each year?**

No, there are no changes to the current number of assessment series offered. Students have two opportunities in each Academic Year to sit their core assessments which remain available in Autumn and Summer of each year of the T Level.

**9. Does this affect how Providers book/ enter students for TQ Core assessments for each assessment series?**

No, the changes will not affect how Providers book or enter students. Students registered for Core assessments will now be able to book/enter for either the Core examination papers and / or the ESP during an assessment series.

**10. When will students be provided with a certificate?**

Students will be provided with a certificate or statement of achievement by the DfE in the November following their second year of study. Updated certificates and statements of achievement following assessments in the Autumn series will be issued in the following June. Students will not receive an aggregated core component result until they have taken both the Core Exams and the Employer Set Project. Students who take one of the Core sub components (either the Core Exams or the Employer Set Project)

will be provided with a breakdown of attainment on results day for the sub-component that they have taken, via results slips issued by their T Level Awarding Organisation.

### **11. Will this affect what I report on the Manage T Level Results Service?**

Awarding Organisations delivering the Technical Qualification are responsible for submitting entry and results data to the DfE through the Manage T Level Results Service. This will not change and therefore there is no additional action for Providers following the introduction of the changes to the Core Component. For more information on the Manage T Level Results Service, please [see About Manage T Level results – T Levels support for schools and colleges](#).

### **12. Where can we find out more information?**

For more information on the changes to the TQ Core assessments but also wider information about how the Department for Education are reforming technical education and developing T Level qualifications for post-16 students, please refer to the T Level Action Plan published on gov.uk- [T Level action plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

If you have a question, please check out the DfE's [T Levels support for schools and colleges pages on gov.uk or con](#)tact the DfE using the 'Contact Us' option at the bottom of that page.

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