



OCN NI Vocational and Technical Qualifications Guidance for the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF)

Frequently Asked Questions

OCN NI has created a guidance document titled 'Vocational and Technical Qualifications Guidance for the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF)'. This will provide all the information you need to navigate OCN NI's process for submitting VTQ

What are VTQ's?

VTQ is the acronym used for Vocational and Technical qualifications.

What is the VCRF?

The VCRF refers to the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework which has been put in place for Awarding Organisations, like OCN NI, offering VTQs.

This revised framework has been created to ensure that all learner grades awarded from 1st August 2020-31st August 2021 will have the same standards and recognition as any other year and will carry the same degree of portability for learners, when considering progression pathways.

How will qualifications be categorised under the VCRF?

In line with the new regulatory guidelines, OCN NI has grouped its qualifications into two broad categories:

Category A: Qualifications where teacher assessed grades **will not** play a part in awarding. Usually occupational qualifications/qualifications used as a Licence to Practice/Professional qualifications - including OCN NI Level 5 OCN NI Level 5 in Hair and Beauty Management, OCN NI, OCN NI Level 3 Diploma in Commercial Dog Grooming, Animal Welfare and Salon Management and OCN NI Level 3 Youth Work Practice.

Category B: Qualifications where teacher assessed grades **will** play a part in awarding. Usually, VTQs/Other General qualifications, most like GCSEs, AS and A levels, which are important for progression to further/higher study or employment, such as: OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Religious Studies, OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Information Technology Applications

How do I know is my qualification is under Category A or Category B?

You can find a list of all our qualifications and what category there are under in our guidance document 'Vocational and Technical Qualifications Guidance for the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF)' under Appendix 1.

Alternatively, you can follow this link to the Qualification Explainer Tool: [Summer 2021 Qualification Explainer Tool \(ofqual.gov.uk\)](https://www.ofqual.gov.uk/summer-2021-qualification-explainer-tool).

If you cannot find your qualification on this list or are still unsure, please contact the Compliance and Audit team (compliance@ocnni.org.uk)

What is a CAG/calculated grade?

A CAG refers to the term centre assessed grade. If a course was run from 23rd March to 31st July 2020, learners may have been entitled to a CAG. The deadline for all CAGs to be uploaded was 30th November 2020, therefore OCN NI is no longer accepting CAGs.

What is a TAG?

TAG refers to the term Teacher Assessed Grade. If assessment has been affected from 1st August 2020-31st August 2021 and the qualification falls into Category B, learners may be eligible for a TAG.

How do I determine a TAG?

There are many aspects that need to be considered when determining a TAG, most importantly the minimum evidentiary threshold. You should familiarise yourself with our guidance document titled 'Vocational and Technical Qualifications Guidance for the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF)' which will provide you with all the information you need.

If you still require assistance or guidance, you may contact the Compliance and Audit team (compliance@ocnni.org.uk)

When can I start the work to determine TAGs?

Centres can now commence the work to generate teacher assessed grades. Results can be uploaded to QuartzWeb from the 12th April 2021.

How do I submit TAGs to QuartzWeb?

OCN NI has prepared a guidance video on how to submit the results, this can be accessed through the Centre Login section of the OCN NI website.

What is the deadline for TAGs to be uploaded to OCN NI?

To ensure your certificates are issued by 10th August 2021 (AS and A-level results day) and the 12th August 2021 (GCSE results day), centres should ensure their results are uploaded accurately by 28th May 2021. If results are uploaded after this date or are inaccurate, there is no guarantee that OCN NI will be able to process certificates by the respective day. Where requested information has not been provided by the centre or quality assurance issues have not yet been resolved this may cause a delay in certification.

If you do not require your certificates by results day, TAGs must be uploaded by 1st December 2021.

For learners who are expected to finish their qualification by 2022, Year 11/first year results should be received no later than 1st December 2021. note, certificates will not be generated until completion of the qualification.

Can learners appeal their TAGs?

There may be some learners who feel that their teacher assessed grades results from this period do not properly reflect their ability. OCN NI are focused on minimising any disadvantage to learners as a result of these unprecedented circumstances, including allowing appeals where appropriate.

For our qualifications, the proposed conditions set out a two-stage process:

1. Centre review. A review of a grade carried out by the centre based on a procedural or administrative error.

2. OCN NI review.

A review of a grade where it is felt that there has been a procedural failing by the centre or that the grade reflects an unreasonable academic judgement or exercise by the centre.

What if I do not have any TAGs?

If units have been fully completed, assessed and IV'd then these should be not submitted as TAGs. These should be submitted by the normal process and if certification is required by results day, then these must be uploaded accurately via QuartzWeb before the 28th May 2021.

What is the Head of Centre Declaration?

This is a form that should be read, signed and submitted by the Head of Centre for each centre. There is one for VTQs and one for Essential Skills and these should both be sent to compliance@ocnni.org.uk

It is important to send these promptly as OCN NI must receive these declarations before they can start processing TAG results.

Where can I find a copy of the Head of Centre Declaration?

Please see 'OCN NI Guidance for Exceptional Arrangements for Assessing and Grading for Essential Skills Qualifications in Summer 2021' for the Essential Skills HoC declaration.

You can find a copy of the VTQ HoC declaration in the guidance document 'Vocational and Technical Qualifications Guidance for the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF)'. OCN NI will also send round a copy of this declaration to centres in Word format and this will also be accessible on the Centre Login section of the OCN NI website.

If you have any problems accessing these. Please contact compliance@ocnni.org.uk

Will there be external verification with TAGs?

OCN NI must undertake quality assurance of the teacher assessed grades, this will draw upon relevant and appropriate information such as historical centre performance profiles, centre risk profiles and the plausibility of results based upon banked unit data.

OCN NI must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the approach and evidence centres use to determine a teacher assessed grade is appropriate and in line with the minimum evidential threshold. OCN NI will conduct random sampling of grades and submitted evidence to ensure process and practice carried out at the centre are reliable and valid so that the award can be made. This will be carried out remotely and evidence must be made available upon request. OCN NI is aware of the additional burden on centres and will try to mitigate this as far as possible.

Where necessary, OCN NI may request centres to provide further information to support the centres results profile e.g., in comparison to past performance.

OCN NI cannot issue results, where requested information has not been provided by the centre or quality assurance issues have not yet been resolved.

What is the TAG Decision Making Proforma?

This proforma has been developed by OCN NI, to provide a written record that should be retained to document the reasons for which each teacher assessed grade has been submitted.

When should I submit my TAG Decision Making Proforma?

This proforma should be submitted to OCN NI by emailing compliance@ocnni.org.uk. It should be submitted at the same time as TAG results are uploaded via QuartzWeb. When submitting this proforma to OCN NI, please ensure that the Run ID is in the document title.

Result cannot be processed if this proforma is not received by OCN NI.

What document do I need to submit to OCN NI?

OCN NI must receive the following to process TAG results:

- VTQ Head of Centre Declaration
- Results via QuartzWeb
- TAG Decision Making Proforma to accompany results, please ensure that the Run ID is in the document title.

On occasion, OCN NI may request further information. These requests must be fulfilled to enable the processing of TAG results.

How will I receive my certificates?

When e-Certificates are available for download the centre administrator will receive an email to let them know. e-Certificates can be accessed and downloaded via QuartzWeb and paper copies of certificates will be posted out to centres as normal.

Contact Details

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Nature of query	Who to contact	email address & tel no
General queries	Customer Services	customerservices@ocnni.org.uk Tel: 028 90463990
Course administration		
Online registration & certification (Quartz)		
Qualification/course approval enquiries		
Essential Skills	Essential Skills	essentialskills@ocnni.org.uk
Essential Skills administration		Tel: 028 90463990

Essential Skills paper request		
Ofqual/CCEA regulations OCN NI Accreditation regulations Quality review/Centre monitoring Internal verification Assessment Complaints	Compliance and Audit	compliance@ocnni.org.uk Tel: 028 90463990
Fees Invoices	Accounts	accounts@ocnni.org.uk Tel: 028 90463990

It is our policy to deal with queries in a clear and friendly manner, with no undue delay and preferably within 48 hours. If we are unable to respond fully within 48 hours, we will provide you with an estimated response date.

Enquiries are received initially by team members as indicated above and then, if necessary, transferred to the relevant person/team within the OCN NI.

Office hours are 0900 to 1700 Monday to Thursday and 0900 to 1600 Friday (excluding Public and Bank Holidays and Christmas closure) with voicemail available outside of normal office hours.