



T Level Technical Qualification – QA Policy for summer awarding 2021

Version 1.0 May 2021

Introduction

The purpose of this Appendix to the QA policy published on 20 May 2021 is to set out NCFE's approach to Quality Assurance for alternative awarding arrangements of T Levels¹ in 2021. It confirms our approach to sampling, what is required of providers and what NCFE will do to support this process.

Following a consultation on [arrangements for assessing vocational and technical qualifications this summer](#) the DfE confirmed in February that students will be able to receive a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) for the core component of their T Level this summer.

We have worked with colleagues from the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (the Institute), Ofqual, DfE and Pearson to confirm the arrangements for quality assurance of T Level TAGs this summer.

Teacher assessed grading guidance

For general guidance around how to approach teacher assessed grades and the process you should go through when awarding a grade, please take a look at our [Approach to Awarding document](#).

Our [T Levels teacher assessed grades](#) webpage gives you with further detail on the approach for the teacher assessed grades process and our additional assessment materials are [here](#). Providers have been asked to submit grades for each sub-component by **18 June**. The portal for T Level teacher assessed grades submissions opens on **26 May**. You can find guidance on how to submit teacher assessed grades [here](#).

The Quality Assurance process for T Levels

The [JCQ Guidance](#) provides an overview of the Quality Assurance process. This process will apply to T Levels as it does to GCSE, AS and A Level qualifications.

As T Levels are in the first year of delivery, to support providers with making their grading judgments we have provided extra support and guidance throughout the process and this will continue into the final stage of the external quality assurance.

You will already have completed Stages 1 and 2 through the JCQ process. NCFE will now pick up Stage 3: Post-submission sampling.

Stage 3: Post-submission sampling

Following the submission of grades, we will be in contact with you to request examples of student work. Every provider who delivers T Levels will be sampled; we will contact you to request the evidence during the week of 21 June.

We will ask you to submit **5** pieces of student evidence for **each sub-component**, 10 students in total, where this is possible.

¹T Level is a registered trademark of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. The T Level is a qualification approved and managed by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

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You will need to submit this evidence promptly – within 48 hours of the request being made – so it's important that your evidence and records are in good order ahead of that date.

We will provide a secure link for you to share your sample electronically. This will be a Serv-U platform link and you can find guidance on how to use Serv-U [here](#).

Subject experts will review the evidence submitted. If, having reviewed the evidence, the subject expert has questions about your grading decisions, they will contact you to discuss this.

If we have concerns about how you have arrived at any grading decisions from the evidence submitted, we may ask for more evidence. In some cases, if the evidence does not support the grades submitted, we may ask you to reconsider your grades. In some cases, we may need to delay release of results until the subject expert has confirmed your grading decisions.

Conversion of grades to UMS scores

The T Level core consists of 2 sub-components: core examinations and the employer set project. As it is possible to resit either or both of the sub-components after the first assessment series, an individual sub-component result is awarded a uniform mark on the uniform mark scale (UMS) and these individual uniform marks are stored/banked by NCFE.

NCFE's approach for T Levels for summer 2021 is for providers to provide letter grades by sub-component. We will then aggregate the overall core grade which will be issued on results release day.

The sub-component results from this series will have associated uniform marks so that they can be aggregated if needed with sub-component results from resits in future exam series. The mark will be a single notional mark for all students that achieve the same grade on each sub-component. This means that this mark can be carried forward towards the total marks required to achieve the core grade, for this series and future series. The notional UMS that we will use for the T Levels for the summer 2021 series are show in the table below.

UMS			Exam Sub-component TAG (70%)						
			A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
			266	238	210	182	154	126	98
ESP Sub-component TAG (30%)	A*	114	380	352	324	296	268	240	212
	A	102	368	340	312	284	256	228	200
	B	90	356	328	300	272	244	216	188
	C	78	344	316	288	260	232	204	176
	D	66	332	304	276	248	220	192	164
	E	54	320	292	264	236	208	180	152
	U	42	308	280	252	224	196	168	140

How are the UMS different when awarded through a teacher assessed grade and when awarded when assessments have happened?

When a sub-component is sat in a normal exam series, the 'raw' mark is the number of marks a student would achieve on that sub-component. This raw mark would be converted into a uniform mark. This is to make sure that any series-on-series differences in the difficulty of the assessment materials identified and compensated for by the grade boundaries set in the awarding process for

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the sub-components are taken into account before a student's uniform marks are added up to give an overall core grade. When assessments are replaced with a teacher assessed sub-component grade, it is still necessary to assign a notional single uniform mark to that lettered grade so that the sub-component result can be used to determine the core grade if the student resits in a future series. These are the fixed notional uniform marks shown in the table above.

In a normal exam series, where a student can sit the assessment, a range of uniform marks would be awarded for each grade on sub-component, depending on the raw mark achieved by the student. A student with a raw mark just above the raw mark grade B boundary would get a uniform mark just above the UMS grade B boundary, and a student with a raw mark just below the raw mark grade A boundary would get a uniform mark just below the UMS grade A boundary. These students would have the same grade (grade B) for the sub-component, but different uniform marks.

When assessments are replaced with teacher assessed grades, the raw mark mapping cannot happen as there are no raw marks. Instead, a sub-component teacher assessed grade (TAG) is submitted as a lettered grade, which converts to a fixed number of notional UMS (see table above) for that lettered grade. The UMS is a single notional uniform mark for all students that achieve the same grade on each sub-component. Students getting the same TAG grade will all get the same uniform mark. In the absence of the raw mark detail, it is considered fairest for the midpoint of the uniform mark range for each grade to be awarded as the uniform mark for students in the June 2021 series. The exception is grade U. As grade U has a wider UMS mark range, the midpoint of the grade U range would have a disproportionate effect when the grades are aggregated. For this reason, the uniform mark given for grade U as a TAG will be the midpoint between the grade E boundary and a notional boundary set the same number of uniform marks below the grade E boundary as the grade D boundary is above the grade E boundary.

As an example, a student awarded a B grade TAG for the employer set project would be awarded the midpoint uniform mark for that grade (90 UMS) and so in a resit would need to achieve higher than the midpoint of the B grade range, i.e. they would need to achieve a high B grade or a higher grade, for the resit to improve their total uniform mark for the core component.

Timescales for review

Teacher assessed grading portal opens	26 May 2021
Teacher assessed grading portal closes	18 June 2021
Stage 3 sampling requested from	21 June 2021
Results released to providers	No later than 9 August 2021
Results released to learners	10 August 2021

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Appeals	August / September

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Change history record

Version	Description of change	Date of issue
1.0	Produced to support Summer 2021 teacher assessed grades	May 2021