

Centre guidance for Teacher Assessed Grades Under the Vocational and Technical Qualifications Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF) 2021

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1. Qualifications covered by this document

This guidance relates to the following regulated qualifications:

ESOL Skills for Life qualifications

ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 1) 601/5445/7
 ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 2) 601/5447/0
 ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) (Entry 3) 601/5407/X
 ESB Level 1 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) 601/5465/2
 ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) 601/5467/6

ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Reading) (Entry 1) 601/5469/X
 ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Reading) (Entry 2) 601/5471/8
 ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Reading) (Entry 3) 601/5411/1
 ESB Level 1 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Reading) 601/5473/1
 ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Reading) 601/5490/1

ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) (Entry 1) 601/5470/6
 ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) (Entry 2) 601/5472/X
 ESB Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) (Entry 3) 601/5444/5
 ESB Level 1 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) 601/5474/3
 ESB Level 2 Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Writing) 601/5483/4

Speech qualifications

ESB Entry Level Award in Communicating with Art (Entry 1) 600/3618/7
 ESB Entry Level Award in Communicating with Drama (Entry 1) 600/3596/1
 ESB Entry Level Award in Communicating with Music (Entry 1) 600/3620/5
 ESB Entry Level Award in Communicating with Others (Entry 1) 501/0140/7
 ESB Entry Level Award in Developing Independent Communication Skills (Entry 1) 501/0186/9
 ESB Entry Level Award in First Steps in Communicating with Others (Entry 1) 501/0143/2
 ESB Entry Level Award in Independent Communication Skills (Entry 1) 501/0142/0
 ESB Entry Level Award in Oral Communication with Others (Entry 1) 501/0138/9
 ESB Entry Level Award in Introducing Oral Skills for Interviews (Entry 1) 601/8415/2
 ESB Entry Level Award in Developing Oral Interview Skills (Entry 2) 501/0136/5
 ESB Entry Level Award in Oral Communication in the Community (Entry 2) 501/0187/0
 ESB Entry Level Award in Preparing for Performing Within a Team (Entry 2) 600/2968/7
 ESB Entry Level Award in Oral Interview Skills (Entry 3) 501/0188/2
 ESB Entry Level Award in Reading to a Child (Entry 3) 600/8164/8

ESB Entry Level Award in Inspiring Confidence in Employability (Entry 1) 601/5121/3
 ESB Entry Level Award in Inspiring Confidence in Employability (Entry 2) 603/0400/5
 ESB Entry Level Award in Inspiring Confidence in Employability (Entry 3) 603/0477/7

2. Introduction

The Vocational and Technical Qualifications Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF) came into effect on 24th March 2021, in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which has resulted in a loss of education and training since March 2020. Many learners have experienced disruption to, or a lack of, teaching, learning and assessment. Given the ongoing disruption being caused by the pandemic, it is the English Government's policy that it is not viable for all assessments to continue for all learners in the academic year 2020 to 2021.

The VCRF Conditions permit English Speaking Board (International) Ltd to adapt many of its qualifications (see *ESB-INFO-20 Centre Guidance for Synchronous Adapted Speech Assessments* and *ESB-INFO-21 Centre Guidance for Adapted ESOL Skills for Life Speaking and Listening Assessments*). In addition, for the qualifications listed on pages 2-3 of this document, ESB International will be offering Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) in cases where learners are unable to access adapted assessments or ESOL Skills for Life Reading and Writing assessments. This applies to learners who have been registered for, or were due to take, an assessment that would have led to the issue of a result between 1 August 2020 and 31 August 2021.

It is our expectation that the vast majority of learners will be able to take their assessments in their centres or using computer-based adaptations where these are offered. In situations where centres are closed, learners are shielding, or adapted assessments are not accessible, learners may receive results based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs).

3. The process

Step 1 Application

Complete the application form for TAGs (Appendix 1) and e-mail it to product@esbuk.org. This form declares your intention to apply for TAGs and states the reason why the learners could not complete their assessment. It must be signed by the Head of Centre or equivalent. The application will be reviewed by ESB International and you will be informed by email if it is approved and you are able to submit Teacher Assessed Grades for your learners.

Step 2 Approval

If your application to submit TAGs is approved, we will send you a spreadsheet **Teacher Assessed Grades 2021** to complete and submit to product@esbuk.org, with:

- Centre details
- Qualification and level
- Grade (Pass or Unsuccessful)
- ULN
- First name
- Surname
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Evidence available for audit

It is important that **all** learner results are submitted, including those who would have been expected to be unsuccessful. This will allow ESB International to compare overall cohort performance with previous years. All

information must be accurate and any errors will result in delays and costs of replacement certificates. If any errors are made or changes required, a new form must be submitted.

Step 3 - Internal quality assurance

Submit:

- 1) the Head of Centre Declaration (Appendix 2), which verifies that checks on the Teacher Assessed Grades were conducted by both the subject teacher and the relevant head of department or equivalent or, where there is no person in such a role, the head of Centre or equivalent, and that effective arrangements are in place to quality assure the Teacher Assessed Grades before submitting them, and
- 2) the completed spreadsheet to product@esbuk.org via We transfer <https://wettransfer.com/> Do not send it as an attachment to an email, to manage the security of personal data. ESB International will review the spreadsheet and may ask to see the evidence.

As part of your centre's internal quality assurance, ESB International expects a clear approach to making judgements in relation to each learner's Teacher Assessed Grade, determined by the specific performance of that learner in relation to the qualification, and a high-level check of previous years' results data to indicate that grades are not overly lenient or harsh compared to previous cohorts.

Step 4 – External quality assurance

ESB International will review the submission and evidence for Teacher Assessed Grades and may ask for copies of the evidence or further information. We will draw on historical centre results data, centre risk profiles and the evidence base for the Teacher Assessed Grade for each learner.

As part of its quality assurance process ESB International may also ask centres for learner enrolment evidence. This is because Ofqual expects awarding organisations to carry out due diligence to ensure all non-registered learners are authentic.

Step 5 – Results and Certification

When your Teacher Assessed Grades have been approved, you will be notified by email. Once you have been notified of the results, the Certificates will be dispatched within 10 working days.

4. Evidence requirements

4.1 Timing and number of submissions

Centres are not limited to one submission. You may submit at any point between 24th March and 31st August 2021.

4.2 Sources of evidence

The strength of evidence has been split into two groups, with group A being the stronger. A minimum of one piece of evidence must come from group A and at least one additional piece of evidence from either group A or group B.

Examples of accepted evidence groupings:

- Mock assessment and teacher profiles of individual learners (1 x A and 1 x B)
- Mock assessment and homework (1 x A and 1 x B)
- Two mock assessments (2 x A)

Group A	Group B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mock assessments* • Evidence from formative assessments, e.g. completed assessment checklists and teacher feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class work/homework • Teacher profiles of individual learners • Initial assessments and diagnostic assessments • Individual Learning Plans

*Mock assessments: For ESOL Skills for Life qualifications, this may be a past or sample paper from ESB or another ESOL Skills for Life Awarding Organisation. There are sample papers available on the ESB International website. In addition, there are two sets of sample papers available only to registered centres, which are password-protected. Please email product@esbuk.org if you require access to these.

Mock assessments should have been completed under timed conditions and supervision, remotely or in class.

You should retain the evidence which is used to support a Teacher Assessed Grade until 6 months after the date of the issue of the result, or the conclusion of any appeal in relation to that result, whichever is later. Learner evidence must be made available to ESB International on request; however, it does **not** need to be submitted alongside the spreadsheet.

4.3 Minimum evidential threshold

Ofqual requires all awarding organisations to ensure that its approach uses sources of reasonably trusted evidence along with a sufficiently robust basis for quality assurance.

This means that where there is not appropriate evidence available to centres upon which to base a Teacher Assessed Grade, ESB International may determine that it is unable to issue a result which has sufficient validity and reliability to meet one or more of the principles of the VCRF.

5. Centre responsibilities

5.1 Judgements

Group A evidence relates closely to the specification content and should reflect the sorts of questions and tasks that students would normally undertake in preparation for the qualification. You should make students aware of the sources of evidence that will form the basis of the results submitted, but not the final result that you submit to ESB International. As far as possible, the sources of evidence should be consistent across a class or cohort of learners. You are asked to make a holistic judgement of each student's performance on a representative range of evidence relating to the qualification's specification content that they have been taught (either in the classroom or via remote learning). Teachers can use evidence of a student's performance from any point during the course of study, provided they are confident that it reflects the student's own work. In coming to these holistic judgements, teachers will use their professional judgement to balance the full range of evidence available for each student against the performance standard set out in the grade descriptors and exemplification material, in line with the centre's internal quality assurance process. This should include both Pass and Unsuccessful outcomes.

Where the centre has no evidence upon which to base a Teacher Assessed Grade, the centre should not provide one.

Ofqual has published a useful guide on making objective judgements:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-for-centres-about-making-objective-judgements/information-for-centres-about-making-objective-judgements>

5.2 Reasonable adjustments and equal opportunities

Centres should also consider the likely impact of any Reasonable Adjustment to which a learner would have had access. For example, if a learner qualifies for extra time in an assessment by examination, in the information it provides in

respect of that learner, centres must reflect how it considers the learner would have performed having the full amount of time to which he or she would have been entitled.

More broadly, centres must make any judgements in an impartial, balanced and unbiased way such that, as far as possible, the information provided by them avoids bias and learners are not systematically advantaged or disadvantaged by having or not having a characteristic or special educational need.

5.3 Review

The information provided by a centre needs to have been reviewed **by both**:

- (a) subject teachers or assessors, and
- (b) the relevant head of department or equivalent or, where there is no person in such a role, the head of centre or equivalent,

Both of whom sign the Centre Declaration (Appendix 2) which is submitted to ESB International with the evidence.

6. Quality assurance

Once ESB International is in receipt of a cohort of Teacher Assessed Grades for learners, it will carry out appropriate quality assurance activities, as required to ensure it complies with the principles set out in Ofqual's Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF).

This will always involve:

- A comparison of centre performance with previous years,
- centre risk profiles,
- and the evidence base for the Teacher Assessed Grade for each learner.

This may involve a request for the evidence identified to calculate results.

Where ESB International requests evidence, this will be followed by acceptance or rejection of the Teacher Assessed Grades.

7. Results, certificates and invoicing

ESB International will email you the decision regarding results after the quality assurance processes have been carried out. Certificates will be issued within ten working days of notification of results.

Invoicing of centres will occur in accordance with current advertised practices.

8. Appeals

ESB International recognises that learners should have access to a right of appeal if they feel the relevant process was not followed correctly for Teacher Assessed Grades. An appeal should be focused upon whether the process was followed and, where applicable, should not involve second-guessing the judgement of teachers, tutors or trainers, who know their learners best. Please follow the process set out in ESB International's Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy for any appeal relating to Teacher Assessed Grades.

Contact

If centre staff have any questions on the process or the content of this document, they should put these in writing to product@esbuk.org.

Appendix 1 Application for Teacher Assessed Grades

Please complete one form for each batch of Teacher Assessor Grades you submit.

1. Centre information

Name of Centre _____

2. Justification: Why are you applying for Teacher Assessed Grades? Please tick all that apply.

ESOL Skills for Life Reading and Writing:

- Assessments were planned for January/February and the centre closed
- Learners are shielding
- Learners have left the area
- Other (please give details) _____

Speech assessments and ESOL Skills for Life Speaking and Listening

- Learners cannot access adapted assessments
- Other (please give details) _____

3. Qualification details and learner numbers.

Qualification title	Level	Number of learners

4. Declaration (To be completed by both a teacher and the relevant head of department or equivalent or, where there is no person in such a role, the head of centre or equivalent)

We confirm that that this information is accurate, and these learners can only achieve a result by the use of Teacher Assessed Grades.

Name _____

Role _____ Contact email / phone number _____

Name _____

Role _____ Contact email / phone number _____

If you have any questions about this form, please email product@esbuk.org

Appendix 2 Centre Declaration to accompany Teacher Assessed Grades

The calculated assessment grades for _____ (name of centre) have been submitted.

The Conditions and Requirements for the Vocational and Technical Qualifications Contingency Regulatory Framework (March 2021) page 25 states:

The Teacher Assessed Grades submitted by a centre needs to have been reviewed **by both**:

- (a) subject teachers or assessors, and
- (b) the relevant head of department or equivalent or, where there is no person in such a role, the head of centre or equivalent.

I confirm that:

- these grades have been checked for accuracy, reviewed by a second member of staff and are accurate and represent the professional judgements made by my staff
- entries were appropriate for each candidate in that students entered were those already studying the course, and each candidate has no more than one entry per subject
- my centre has met the requirements set out by English Speaking Board (International) Ltd for internal quality assurance
- I am satisfied that each student's grade is based on an appropriately broad range of evidence and is their own work
- each student has been taught an appropriate amount of content to provide the basis for a result
- access arrangements and reasonable adjustments were provided with appropriate input from the SENCo and other specialists (and where they were not, that has been taken into account)
- I am confident that the judgements are fair
- all relevant student evidence and records are available for inspection, for six months, as necessary.

Name _____

Role _____

Contact email and phone number _____

If you have any questions about this form, please email product@esbuk.org