

Monitoring reports on qualification awards

Ofqual has published 2 reports about how it monitored awarding organisations' delivery and award of qualifications to students and learners in 2020 and 2021.

One report covers general qualifications (GCSEs and A levels) in summer 2021 and the other covers vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs) for the 12 months from September 2020.

The [GCSE, AS and A level summer report 2021](#) outlines how Ofqual monitored exam board processes that allowed students to be awarded teacher-assessed grades. [Delivery and award of vocational and technical qualifications in 2021](#) details how students and learners were awarded qualifications through assessments or alternative arrangements including teacher-assessed grades.

Ofqual introduced the General Qualifications Alternative Awarding Framework after the government's decision in January 2021 that it would not be fair for exams and assessments to go ahead in the summer. This required exam boards to support teachers to assess their students for GCSE, AS, A level and other general qualifications using a range of evidence, focusing on the content they had been taught. The framework took effect in April 2021.

The GCSE, AS and A level summer report 2021 shows that, despite the difficulties posed by the pandemic, summer 2021 saw more than 6 million general qualification results issued on time to 1.2 million students. Compared to 2020, GCSE entries increased by 0.4% while A level entries rose by 3%.

Ofqual Chief Regulator Dr Jo Saxton said:

Schools, colleges and training providers, together with exam boards and awarding organisations, worked hard so that millions of qualifications could be awarded to students and learners in exceptionally difficult circumstances. These efforts enabled them to progress to the next stage of their lives.

Ofqual regulates 4 exam boards that award GCSEs, AS and A levels in England, and, as of August 2021, we regulated 174 awarding organisations offering more than 17,000 different regulated VTQs.

Ofqual also put in place the Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework, which gave awarding organisations the flexibility needed to award qualifications in these exceptional circumstances. VTQ awarding organisations issued 4.6 million certificates, which is a 9% increase on the previous year. For 58% of these qualifications, results were determined on normal or adapted assessments, while 32% were based on a combination of assessments and

teacher-assessed grades.

Learners took VTQs in colleges, schools, training providers or via employers. These qualifications gave some people a licence to practise, and others an opportunity to progress to further or higher education.