

# Statement on grading vocational and technical qualifications this summer



Since the decision to stop exams and external assessment this summer due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown, Ofqual has been working with 160 awarding organisations to help them ensure their alternative arrangements for over 14,000 qualifications fit within our vocational and technical qualifications (VTQ) regulatory framework.

Monday's decision to move away from the algorithmic approach used for GCSEs and A levels has led to those few awarding organisations that used similar approaches to reconsider their awarding decisions and place greater weight on the most trusted evidence available. Those that used qualification-level centre assessment grades will be able to recalculate results and issue them on time.

Others will need more time, because their approach is more complex: OCR have said that their Cambridge National results will issue next week. Pearson, which initially did not think there would need to be significant changes made, has now decided to revise its arrangements to ensure that students' qualification-level results better reflect the unit-level results that students have already secured through internally-assessed units. For all awarding organisations, both their original approaches and their revised approach are in line with Ofqual's VTQ regulatory framework.

Everyone is working as quickly as possible to confirm results as soon as possible, recognising the impact that delays are having on schools, colleges and students. No learner's result will go down as a consequence of regrading.

Published 19 August 2020

Last updated 19 August 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

## 1. 19 August 2020

Updated to state that no learner's result will go down as a consequence of regrading.

## 2. 19 August 2020

First published.

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# Student Loans Company ready to handle changes in circumstances and late applications

News story

A blog by Derek Ross, Executive Director of Operations



Over the coming weeks, we will distribute in the region of £2 billion in maintenance loans to students across the UK, and over £5 billion in tuition fee payments to their universities and colleges. Payments will be made to over one million students and we want to reassure everyone who has received their student finance assessment that they will receive their funds at the start of term, and that their tuition fee loan payments will be made on their behalf to their university or college.

The last few months have been challenging and uncertain for many and we are working hard to ensure that all payments are made on time. That's why we want to offer every reassurance that if you have already been assessed for student finance you will receive it at the start of term. If you are now attending a different university, college or studying a different course you must notify us. Students who have already applied for finance but want to change their university, college or course can easily update their details on their online account at [www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance) and we encourage them to do so as soon as possible.

For those who have not applied yet, it is important that you apply now. Some student finance applications can be processed in as little as two-days but some, depending on your circumstances can take up to six weeks or more. So, for anyone who hasn't applied yet, it's really important that you do so as soon as possible. The sooner you submit your application the sooner we can get your finance in place. It may be the case that some late applications can't be fully processed before the start of term – but we will make sure you have some funding in place at the start of term wherever possible.

We recognised early on that this will undoubtedly be a [challenging academic year for SLC](#) and we have been working hard to prepare for an increase in deferrals, transfers or withdrawals. Customers should be aware that while we are operating as normal, the vast majority of SLC colleagues are working at home so at times it can take a little longer than usual to answer your call.

Our customer service teams are available to deal with queries via social media and information is available online, including a recent blog on [Clearing the myths on student finance](#).

Students can get in touch with SLC by phone or via social media. For more information, visit: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/student-loans-company](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/student-loans-company)

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## [Achieving net zero carbon emissions through a whole systems approach](#)

In June 2019, the UK became the first major country to legislate for a net-zero target for carbon emissions by 2050. Government needs to shape policies and regulations to create a market environment that increases consumer and business demand for low-carbon solutions and encourages sustainable private sector investment decisions. Policies across all areas of government interact to influence the transition of the whole economy towards net zero.

In a letter to the Prime Minister sent in January 2020, the Council for Science and Technology (CST) explores how a systems approach might be used to inform government thinking and proposes 9 recommendations focused on 3 areas:

- developing the analytical capability, flow of information, and reporting needed to inform decisions
- maximising the contribution of technology, mobilise financial systems and galvanise international collaboration
- strengthening the institutions, governance frameworks and leadership structures needed across central government to galvanise action to achieve net-zero

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## [New Scottish space project to boost](#)

# global sustainable development

Today, on World Humanitarian Day (19th August), the UK Space Agency has announced new funding for a Glasgow-based company to help Kenya develop cleaner and more efficient energy in a sustainable way.

Omanos Analytics, in partnership with Global Surface Intelligence (GSI), will be working with the Kenyan National Environment Management Authority to characterise and monitor land-use around current and prospective geothermal power plants in order to support the socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable growth of the Kenyan geothermal energy sector.

UK Government Minister for Scotland, David Duguid said:

Congratulations to Glasgow-based Omanos Analytics for securing this new funding from the UK Space Agency.

It is fantastic that satellite technology developed here in Scotland will be used to support the geothermal sector and help communities in Kenya develop cleaner and more efficient energy.

This project is not only important for Scotland's space sector but also shows leadership in climate change with Glasgow also set to host UN Climate Change talks next year.

The scheme is one of 10 new cutting-edge projects involving UK companies helping tackle global development problems – from the spread of malaria to human trafficking. The UK Space Agency's International Partnership Programme (IPP) has provided £3.4 million funding in total, including just over £300,000 for the gE0thermal Kenya project.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

From flooding to climate change, around the world people continue to be affected by crises that are having a profound impact on their countries' economies and their lives.

These 10 new projects have the potential to provide solutions to the world's biggest development problems by using the latest and most high-tech space technologies such as satellites, and help improve millions of people's lives in developing countries.

Omanos Analytics, based in Glasgow's Fairfield Govan Heritage Centre, will combine on-the-ground intelligence from local stakeholders with satellite data, application of machine learning algorithms to satellite data, and dissemination of bespoke data products to key stakeholders.

Celia Davies, Director, Omanos Analytics, said:

We founded Omanos because we wanted to make space data more accessible and useful to communities around the world, and we're absolutely delighted to have the IPP's support for this mission through gE0thermal Kenya.

We'll be working with Kenya's National Environmental Management Authority to support the sustainable growth of the geothermal sector, through a combination of satellite data insights and community consultations.

This announcement comes as a new report is published, evaluating the impact of existing IPP projects.

The report reveals that since launching IPP in 2016, satellite training has been delivered to over 300 health workers across three states of Nigeria, saving an estimated 30 lives; and a marine pollution application has prevented two oil spills from reaching the coastline, saving an estimated £3 million in clean-up costs and significantly reducing the impact on the environment and its wildlife.

The report also shows that space-based solutions continue to be twelve times more cost-effective at delivering sustainable forestry, seven times more economical in supporting agriculture, and twice as resourceful for ensuring disaster resilience, than ground-based alternatives.

Liz Cox, IPP's Head of International Relations at the UK Space Agency, said:

The compelling results of the previous projects cement the case for investment in space for sustainable development. IPP is not only demonstrating the value of satellite solutions and improving the lives of people on the ground in developing countries but also facilitating effective alliances between the United Kingdom and international organisations. It's a 'win-win' and an exciting moment in the Programme.

IPP, a £30 million a year programme, has already grant-funded 33 projects in 44 countries across Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and built partnerships between 120 space-enabled data organisations and 147 international partners in developing countries. These projects are designed to meet UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) such as support for precision agriculture, early warning systems for disaster prediction, maritime safety, and disease forecasting.

The Programme has so far generated £279 million in Gross Value Added for the UK economy and supports 3,300 jobs globally. The UK economy gains more than £2.50 for every £1 invested in IPP projects.

The UK space sector is an economic success story, growing by over 60% since 2010. The sector already supports £300 billion of UK economic activity through the use of satellite services, and the government has established a new National Space Council to consider how space policy can enhance the country's prosperity and place in the world, as well as our security interests.

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## **ESFA Update: 19 August 2020**

[unable to retrieve full-text content] Latest information and actions from the Education and Skills Funding Agency for academies, schools, colleges, local authorities and further education providers