

Ofqual survey of VTQ results

Response of the Association of School and College Leaders

A. Introduction

1. The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) represents over 23,000 education system leaders, heads, principals, deputies, vice-principals, assistant heads, business managers and other senior staff of state-funded and independent schools and colleges throughout the UK. ASCL members are responsible for the education of more than four million children and young people across primary, secondary, post-16 and specialist education. This places the association in a strong position to consider this issue from the viewpoint of the leaders of schools and colleges of all types.
2. ASCL welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this survey.

B. Key points

3. This response includes comments which have been provided by ASCL members. It is important to remember that schools and colleges are major providers of VTQs and they not only provide level 3 and 2 programmes as discreet provision, but they also offer vocational and technical qualifications alongside academic programmes at both levels as a programme of study. This means that responses may differ depending on patterns of delivery of qualifications in individual institutions, the variety of student groups they are delivered to and the types of other stakeholders, such as employers, with whom they work.

C. Answers to specific questions

Issuing results

How far in advance of A level results day would you prefer to receive level 3 VTQ results from awarding organisations?

- One day before they are to be issued to students.
 - **One week before they are to be issued to students.**
 - Other (please specify)
4. We believe that issuing the results a week in advance will give schools and colleges sufficient time to process results and prepare information for students before an agreed results day. We are concerned, however, that some centres may feel compelled to issue some results earlier than the agreed date, for example, to those who are progressing to apprenticeships, especially where there is competition for places.
 5. Any advance release of results by Awarding Organisations to centres must be embargoed until an agreed date for release to students.

When do you normally issue level 3 VTQ results to students who are progressing to FE or HE?

- **A level results day**
 - **Before A level results day**
 - **After A level results day**
6. Prior to Covid, this varied depending on the VTQ in question and could be any or all the above. We suggest that results should be issued at the latest on A level results day and earlier if the situation allows, i.e. a job or apprenticeship offer depends on this result.

In the longer term, should centres release level 3 VTQ results to students who want to progress to FE or HE on a common VTQ results day?

- **Yes**
 - **No**
7. Yes. We believe this will help to bring parity to vocational and technical programmes with academic ones.

If yes, when should this be?

- **On the same day as A level results**
 - One week before A level results
 - At another point before A level results
8. On the same day as A level results, as is planned for T levels.

In the longer term, should centres release level 3 VTQ results to students who want to progress to FE or HE on a common VTQ results day?

- **Yes**
 - **No**
9. Yes. Please see our answer in paragraph 8 above.

If yes, when should this be?

- **On the same day as A level results**
 - One week before A level results
 - At another point before A level results [please specify]
10. Yes, this should be on the same day as A level results.

If there is a common VTQ results day, do you think that results should be issued to centres under embargo?

- **Yes**
 - **No**
 - Please explain your reasons
11. Yes. Results should be issued under embargo. This will be fairer to students who take the same exams in different centres.

Checkpoints

Would you like a later checkpoint to ensure that awarding organisations have all the information they need from centres about each eligible student to issue a result by the deadline?

12. Yes. A later, additional checkpoint, will ensure all eligible students are issued with their results by the deadline.

When would you expect to be able to provide the necessary information to awarding organisations for the initial checkpoint?

- **By the end of the spring term**
- By May half-term
- Other

13. Under normal circumstances, and assuming there are no adjustments taken into consideration, this would be at the end of the Spring term.

When would you expect to be able to provide the necessary information to awarding organisations for the later checkpoint?

- By mid-June
- By the end of the summer term
- **Other**

14. We would expect to be able to provide this information by the end of June.

Do you think it would be helpful to have additional checkpoints?

- Yes
- No

15. Not sure. We do not think it is helpful to have a lot of checkpoints, but we would want centres to be able to ask for additional checkpoints should they feel this is necessary. This may be because of issues with entries from individuals or groups of students, employers or concerns from particular centres.

If yes, when should these be and what would the purpose of the additional checkpoint be?

16. These additional checkpoints, if requested by centres, should be available throughout the year but especially in the summer term.

Impact

Will the results deadline and term-time checkpoints have an impact on the way you administer results for students at the moment?

- **Yes**
- No
- Not sure
- Please explain your reasons

17. Yes. It will impact on the administration of results and might mean that more resource is needed by a centre during the submission of results period and when responses to checkpoints are required.

Qualifications in scope

In the longer term, should a wider range of VTQs than level 3 VTQs used for progression to FE and HE be subject to similar checkpoints and deadlines?

- Yes
- No

18. Yes. This should mean that other level qualifications such as level 2 and professional qualifications are treated in a similar way as level 3 VTQs and academic programmes.

If yes, which other qualifications should be included?

- level 2 VTQs used alongside GCSEs for progression to FE.
- any VTQ that is taught as part of a student's 16-19 programme.
- **Open response [please explain your reasons]**
- Other [please specify]

19. Level 2 VTQs used alongside GCSEs for progression to FE and any VTQ which is taught as part of a student's 16-19 programme of study.

In the longer term, should centres release results to students for level 2 VTQs on a common results day where those results are used alongside GCSEs for progression to FE?

- Yes
- No

20. Yes – for the same reason we outlined earlier for level 3 qualifications.

If yes, should this be the same date as GCSE results day?

- Yes
- No
- If no, please specify.

21. Yes, level 2 qualifications should be issued on the same day as GCSE results.

Conclusion

22. We hope this response to the survey questions is helpful. We feel strongly that VTQs should be treated in the same way as academic qualifications at both levels 3 and 2 and that results should be issued on the same day to demonstrate parity.

23. However, we also know that, in some cases, it is more in the students' interest to receive results on a more flexible basis, eg. earlier if they are going on to an apprenticeship for which places are very competitive. In this case, some discretion may be necessary but there should be strict rules in place for the earlier issue of results.

24. ASCL is willing to be contacted and to provide more information if necessary.

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