

WJEC Level 1 / 2 Vocational Awards and Certificates

Frequently Asked Questions (**Wales**) (Updated October 2016)

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About WJEC Vocational Awards and Certificates

What are the WJEC Vocational Awards and Certificates?

WJEC Vocational Awards and Certificates are level 1/2 qualifications that enable learners to gain broad knowledge and understanding of a specific vocational sector. In addition to the development of sector specific knowledge and understanding, these qualifications also support learners to develop the essential employability skills that are valued by employers, further and higher education.

What subjects are available?

Qualifications are currently available in the following subjects:

Subject	Award	Certificate
Applied Science*	✓	
Constructing the Built Environment	✓	
Creative and Media	✓	✓
Designing the Built Environment	✓	
Engineering	✓	
Event Operations	✓	
Hospitality and Catering	✓	
Planning and Maintaining the Built Environment	✓	
Retail Business	✓	✓
Science for Work*	✓	
Sport	✓	✓
Tourism	✓	✓

* Please note, Applied Science and Science for Work are being withdrawn. The final assessment opportunity is summer 2017 with a final resit opportunity in January 2018.

For more information please visit the WJEC [Vocational Qualifications webpage](#).

What is the difference between an Award and a Certificate?

The difference between the Award and Certificate is the size of the qualification. Vocational Awards are half the size of Vocational Certificates. In subjects where a Vocational Certificate is available, the Vocational Award is 'nested' inside the Certificate enabling centres to co-teach the qualifications. Please see individual specifications for more details.

How long is the course?

Vocational Awards and Certificates have been designed as two-year courses although this is not a mandatory requirement. Centres should take into account the Guided Learning Hours (GLH) assigned to the qualifications when determining teaching time. Vocational Awards consist of 120GLH while the Certificates are 240GLH. These guided learning hours are in line with GCSE Single and Double Awards which might assist schools and colleges in their timetabling.

Can these qualifications be taught both at KS4 and post-16?

Our Vocational Awards and Certificates have been primarily designed for use with Key Stage 4 learners but may also be suited to post-16 learners in a college environment. Centres should consider the needs and abilities of individual learners when determining which qualification would be most suitable for them.

Are these qualifications available to learners across the UK?

Vocational Awards and Certificates are available to learners in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Centres will need to be aware of specific qualification approval, performance table and funding implications within the country in which they are delivering the qualifications.

How are the Vocational Awards and Certificates qualifications graded?

Our Vocational Awards and Certificates are graded Level 1 Pass, Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*.

How do these qualifications compare to GCSEs?

Vocational Awards and Certificates have been designed to complement GCSEs and other Level 2 qualifications. They span Levels 1 and 2 of the National Qualifications Framework. Level 2 qualifications are broadly equivalent to GCSE grades A* - C in terms of demand with Level 1 being broadly equivalent to GCSE grades D – G. However, it is important to remember that no two qualifications are directly comparable given the differences in content, structure and assessment.

Registrations, Entries and Results

Where can I find the QAN number?

Qualification Accreditation Numbers (QANs) are listed in the specification for the specific qualification, which can be found on the subject homepage.

How do we register learners?

Learners do not need to be registered for Vocational Awards and Certificates but must be entered for the relevant units by the entry deadline. The *Entry Procedures and Coding Information* publication available on the WJEC website at <http://www.wjec.co.uk/exam-officers/entries/> provides detailed information on the different ways in which centres can make entries. Please talk to your exams officer or contact the WJEC entries department at entries@wjec.co.uk if you have any queries.

Where can I find entry codes?

Entry codes for each specification can be found in the *Entry Procedures and Coding Information publication*; this contains useful information for all WJEC qualifications, including entry codes, cash in codes and entry deadlines. The *Entry Procedures and Coding Information* document can be accessed from the Entries section of the WJEC website at <http://www.wjec.co.uk/exam-officers/entries/>.

When do I make entries?

Entries for all Vocational Awards and Certificates must be submitted by **21st February** each year. Centres are encouraged to make early entries to ensure that any queries can be resolved prior to the entry deadline. Entries submitted after the entry deadline may be subject to a Late or Very Late Fee and entries will not be accepted once the last date for receipt of EDI files has passed.

N.B. Learners will be entered for the qualification when the centre enters the aggregation (cash-in) code. Aggregation does not take place automatically.

More information on the Entries process and specific entry codes can be found on the entries WJEC website: <http://www.wjec.co.uk/exam-officers/entries/>. This section also contains useful information such as Key Dates and Timetables.

We are a new centre; how can we register with WJEC?

To register as a WJEC centre for Vocational Awards and Certificates you should contact a member of our centre registration team by telephone on 02920 2026 5077 / 5089 or by email at centres@wjec.co.uk to discuss the individual requirements of your centre and to obtain a registration form.

We are an existing WJEC centre; can we offer Vocational Awards and Certificates?

Before you begin to deliver Vocational Awards and Certificates you should contact a member of our centre registration team by telephone on 02920 2026 5077 / 5089 or by email at centres@wjec.co.uk to ensure that your centre has the correct level of centre approval.

Where can I find out about fees?

Fees are published each academic year in the WJEC *General and Vocational Entry Fees* document which can be found under related documents in the Entries section of the WJEC website at <http://www.wjec.co.uk/exam-officers/entries/>.

When will candidates receive their results?

Results for the Vocational Awards and Certificates are released in August (on the same day as GCSEs). Your exams officer will be able to access them through the Walled Garden on the secure website.

External assessment

How are Vocational Awards and Certificates externally assessed?

WJEC Vocational Awards and Certificates will include at least one of the following types of external assessment:

- a timetabled external examination or,
- an external controlled assessment which takes place in an assessment window.

Both are marked by WJEC examiners.

When are exams available?

External exams are available once a year in the summer series. Dates and times for specific examinations can be found in the *Examinations Timetable and Internal Assessment Deadlines* document under the relevant qualification group (Level 1 / 2 vocational). This document can be found in the Key Dates and Timetable page of the WJEC website at <http://www.wjec.co.uk/exam-officers/key-dates-and-timetables/>.

Can candidates re-sit the exam?

Candidates are allowed one re-sit opportunity for each unit. The best result of the two attempts will count towards the overall grade of the qualification. Candidates may re-sit the entire qualification multiple times.

Are past papers available?

Yes, past papers and mark schemes are made available to registered WJEC centres through the secure website from the end of the examination series. Approximately 6-9 months after the exam series, past papers and mark schemes are made available on the public website, free of charge.

What is an external controlled assessment?

It is a timed, supervised assignment set and marked by WJEC. It is subject to controlled conditions, and must be completed within the external assessment window specified by WJEC.

When is the external controlled assessment available?

The external controlled assessment is available once a year in the summer series. It will not be available before 1st May. Please refer to the *Examinations Timetable and Internal Assessment Deadlines* document for the timetabled window for the current academic year. This document can be found in the Key Dates and Timetable page of the WJEC website at <http://www.wjec.co.uk/exam-officers/key-dates-and-timetables/>.

Where do I find the assignment?

The assignment will be available to download from the WJEC secure website at 00:01 on the first day of the assessment window. Exams Officers will be notified when the assignment is available to download and a message will be put on the subject homepage of the WJEC website. Controlled tasks will only be available to download during the assessment window.

Will the assignment change every year?

Yes. A new assignment will be written for each academic year.

Can candidates complete the assessment in multiple sittings

Yes. Centres can timetable assessments at any time within the prescribed assessment window. All assessment materials (including candidate work) must be stored securely within the centre, usually in a locked cupboard, throughout the assessment period. Work produced over several sessions must be collected at the end of each session and stored securely. Work produced electronically must be saved securely to ensure it can't be amended between sessions. Work stored on memory sticks must also be collected in after each session.

Can learners re-sit the external controlled assessment?

Candidates are allowed one re-sit opportunity per unit. The best result of the two attempts will count towards the overall grade of the qualification. Candidates may re-sit the entire qualification multiple times.

What are the controls on the external controlled assessment?

External controlled assessments are subject to controlled conditions which are specific to the individual assignment briefs. All conditions are set out in each assignment brief under 'Centre Information', and relate to time, resources, supervision and collaboration.

Are past external assignments available?

Yes, past external assignments and mark schemes are made available to registered WJEC centres through the secure website from the end of the examination series. Approximately 6-9 months after the exam series, past external assignments and mark schemes are made available on the public website, free of charge.

Internal assessment

How are Vocational Awards and Certificates internally assessed?

Vocational Awards and Certificates include controlled assessments that are internally marked by centres and externally moderated by WJEC.

What is controlled assessment?

Controlled assessment measures specific understanding and skills that may not necessarily be tested by written examination papers.

When will the controlled assessment tasks be issued to centres?

The controlled assessment tasks can be accessed by centres at any time through the WJEC [secure website](#). Please go to Resources PDF Download > Controlled Assessment Materials. Internal controlled assessment briefs within the Vocational Awards and Certificates are known as Model Assignments. Teachers must ensure that they are using the most up-to-date version of the Model Assignment and should therefore download the Model Assignment from the WJEC secure site when they are ready to begin the assessment rather than using a previously saved version.

Can I change the brief?

Any changes that are made must meet the criteria as set out in 'Accepted changes to this model assignment' in the assessor information included in the model assignment. If the brief is changed evidence of Quality Assurance must be submitted to WJEC at the time of moderation.

Can controlled assessment tasks be completed in Year 10?

Yes but centres should be aware that controlled assessment within the Vocational Awards and Certificates is designed as summative assessment and should only be carried out when all of the learning for the specific unit has taken place. Teachers should also take into account that some of the controlled assessments are synoptic and require the learners to draw on knowledge and understanding gained from across multiple units. Centres should therefore consider the most appropriate time to undertake assessment as part of their curriculum planning.

What is the deadline for the submission of the sample of controlled assessment tasks to the WJEC moderator?

The deadline for submission of the moderation sample is **5th May** each year.

What should I do if there is a delay in the submission of the moderation sample?

Centres should take all reasonable steps to ensure that work is with their appointed moderator by the 5 May. If, due to extenuating circumstances, there is any delay in the dispatch of the moderation sample, the centre must contact the WJEC Subject Officer in writing to notify them of the circumstances and request an extension to the deadline. Centres should not assume that an extension has been granted until they receive a response in writing from the Subject Officer or an authorised member of WJEC staff. Where an extension has not been agreed, any moderation samples received after the deadline may incur an additional fee or be returned to centres unmarked with the centre needing to re-enter the candidates at the next opportunity.

Should marking criteria be shared with students?

Yes. Students should be aware of the marking criteria.

Can a student resit a controlled assessment task?

Yes. Candidates are allowed one re-sit opportunity per unit. However, work presented for the resit assessment must be new work. Candidates cannot present amended work that has previously been submitted.

What are the controlled conditions of conducting the assessment?

Controlled conditions for each assignment are set out in the Model Assignment brief under the section 'assessor information'. Controls will relate to three areas:

- Task Setting
- Task Taking (Time, Resources, Supervision, Authentication, Collaboration)
- Task Marking

All controls for the assignment **must** be adhered to.

Should controlled assessment tasks be taken under usual examination conditions?

Supervision of controlled assessment tasks can be formal (high level of control), informal (medium level of control) or limited (low level of control), as detailed in the relevant specification. Please refer to the 'assessor information' in the Model Assignment brief for more information.

How much feedback can be given to students during the controlled assessment period?

This depends on the level of control specified in the Model Assignment. For subjects with high level of control (formal supervision), no teacher guidance is permitted. For briefs with medium level of control (informal supervision), teachers can provide students with oral and written advice at a general level only. Students can revise work before submitting the final piece. Teachers must not provide specific advice on how to improve drafts to meet assessment criteria. There should be no detailed feedback on errors / omissions.

Please refer to the 'assessor information' in the Model Assignment brief for more information.

What reference materials are allowed during the controlled assessment sessions?

This will vary according to the Model Assignment. During high control sessions, the use of reference material is tightly controlled but there may be some differences across subjects. For Model Assignments with medium level of control (informal supervision), students may have access to any print / electronic resources that are available within the centre.

Please refer to the 'assessor information' in the relevant Model Assignment brief for more information.

How is the work assessed?

The work will be marked internally by the centre and moderated by WJEC by postal moderation.

Where is the mark scheme for the assessment?

The mark scheme or performance bands can be found in the relevant unit section of the specification. This lists the assessment criteria and how a candidate can achieve a Level 1 Pass, Level 2 Pass, Merit or Distinction.

A mark record sheet is available in the related documents section of the webpage, and should be completed and submitted with the learners work, along with any other relevant documentation.

How do I work out what a candidate has achieved, overall, for a unit?

Unit achievement is based on a candidate's ability to meet the assessment criteria. Units can be awarded a summative grade of Level 1 Pass, Level 2 Pass, Level 2 Merit or Level 2 Distinction.

Performance bands have been written to enable candidates to demonstrate their ability against the assessment criteria. There are no additional requirements to achieve higher grades.

To be awarded a **Level 1 Pass** grade for a unit, a candidate must meet all of the minimum requirements of all assessment criteria for the unit, as set out in the Level 1 Pass performance band.

To be awarded a **Level 2 Pass** grade for a unit, a candidate must additionally meet all of the Level 2 pass minimum requirements, as set out in the Level 2 Pass performance band.

To be awarded a **Level 2 Merit** grade for a unit, a candidate must additionally meet all of the Merit minimum requirements, as set out in the Level 2 Merit performance band.

To be awarded a **Level 2 Distinction** grade for a unit, a candidate must additionally meet all of the Distinction requirements, as set out in the Level 2 Distinction bands.

Do we have to internally standardise?

Centres are expected to standardise internal assessment decisions. This is to ensure that all learners are judged to the same standard across different assessors, teaching groups and year to year. Evidence of standardisation should be submitted with learner evidence. Where more than one assessor is involved, the centre must appoint a lead assessor – more information regarding this can be found in the Assessment Section of the relevant specification.

What documentation needs to be completed?

WJEC have produced documentation that should be submitted alongside candidate work. All units require a mark record sheet to be submitted. Observation records and witness statements also need to be submitted as relevant, as indicated in the Assessor Guidance in each Model Assignment brief. Electronic copies of assessment documentation can be found in the related documents section under 'Internal assessment forms'.

How do I submit my candidates' marks to WJEC?

Marks are entered through the [secure website](#) using the Internal Assessment Mark Input Screen (IAMIS).

How do I know which candidates to send?

After marks are submitted to WJEC you can view the requested sample on IAMIS.

Where can I find my moderator details?

Moderator details can be found through IAMIS, by selecting the View Moderator Details option on the webpage. These will only become available after all outcomes have been submitted to WJEC.

When do I submit the work?

Work must be with the moderator by **5th May** in the year of assessment.

Will we get feedback on coursework?

You will be able to view outcomes and your moderator's report on results day. Please log on to the secure website and go to IAMIS.

Funding and Performance Measures

Are these qualifications approved for use in Wales?

Yes. Qualifications Wales has designated the suite of Vocational Awards and Certificates for use in Wales and they are listed on the Qualifications in Wales database (www.qiw.wales).

Are these qualifications approved for use pre-16?

Yes. The suite of Vocational Awards and Vocational Certificates has been approved for use both pre- and post-16.

Do the Vocational Awards and Certificates qualifications attract performance points in Wales?

Yes. Our suite of Vocational Awards and Certificates attract performance points in line with GCSEs.

Performance points for the Vocational Awards are allocated as follows:

Grading Scale	Performance points	L1 threshold	L2 threshold	L3 threshold
Level 2 Distinction*	58	20	20	0
Level 2 Distinction	52	20	20	0
Level 2 Merit	46	20	20	0
Level 2 Pass	40	20	20	0
Level 1 Pass	25	20	0	0

Performance points for the Vocational Certificates are allocated as follows:

Grading Scale	Performance points	L1 threshold	L2 threshold	L3 threshold
Level 2 Distinction*	116	40	40	0
Level 2 Distinction	104	40	40	0
Level 2 Merit	92	40	40	0
Level 2 Pass	80	40	40	0
Level 1 Pass	50	40	0	0

This information can be found on the Qualifications in Wales database (www.qiw.wales) by searching for the specific qualification and selecting the 'Performance Measures Information' tab.

Do Vocational Awards and Certificates contribute to the Level 2 Inclusive (Welsh Baccalaureate and Foundation) measure?

Yes. Welsh Government has confirmed that a maximum of two vocational qualifications (i.e. two qualifications each of equivalent size to a GCSE or one qualifications the size of two GCSEs or larger) can count towards the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (and therefore the Welsh Bacc attainment measure). Therefore, two of our Vocational Awards or one of our Vocational Certificates can contribute to the measure.

Do Vocational Awards and Certificates contribute to the Capped 9 points score?

Yes. In the new capped points score, it will be possible for up to the four (GCSE sized) qualifications to be vocational.