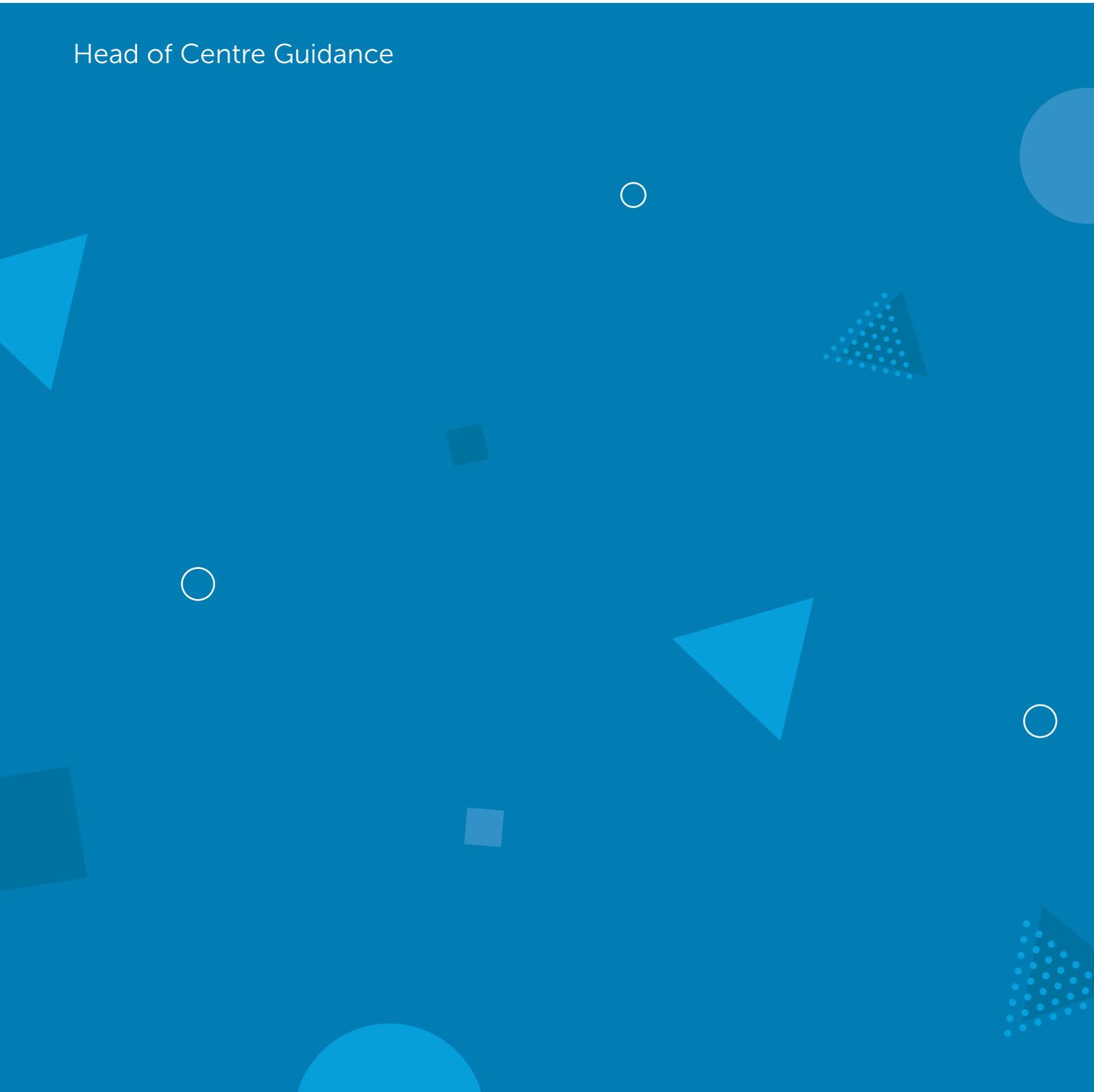


# Awarding for Level 1 and Level 2 Occupational Studies Qualifications Summer 2020

Head of Centre Guidance





## Introduction

On 19 March 2020, the Minister of Education, Peter Weir MLA, announced that the Summer 2020 examination series would be cancelled to help fight the spread of the COVID-19 virus and that grades would be based on a range of evidence and data, including centre estimated grades.

This unprecedented change to assessments has required us to adapt the way grades will be awarded. Following consultation by the Department of Education with representatives of the teaching profession, CCEA has received instruction from the Minister of Education about how to proceed.

This information is provided in the context of the most up-to-date advice for educational settings provided by the Department of Education and HSC Public Health Agency. If that advice changes, Heads of Centre should consider this information in the light of any updated guidance.

CCEA Regulation has been working to enable the award of grades for Occupational Studies Levels 1 and 2 this summer, to facilitate the progression of learners to college, higher education, training, apprenticeships or employment. Instructions for centres with entries for Entry Level Occupational Studies will be included in separate guidance issued for CCEA Entry Level qualifications.

CCEA awarding organisation has been working on the technical process for awarding Occupational Studies and will ask centres to generate overall centre assessment grades for their learners (see the table below). They must do this for all qualifications that they wish to 'cash in' in Summer 2020 in any of the six available occupational areas: Business and Services, Construction, Design and Creativity, Engineering and Engineering Services, Environment and Society, and/or Technology and Innovation.

Grade	SUBJECT LEVEL	EACH UNIT
	UMS required	UMS required
MAXIMUM	200	100
Level 2 Distinction*	180	90
Level 2 Distinction	160	80
Level 2 Merit	140	70
Level 2 Pass	120	60
Level 1 Distinction	100	50
Level 1 Merit	80	40
Level 1 Pass	40	20
Unclassified	0	0

We then require centres to decide if learners would be at the top, middle or bottom of their allocated grade. An overall Occupational Studies qualification is out of 200 uniform marks (UMS), with each unit representing 100 UMS. So, if a learner was estimated a Level 1 Distinction grade, they could score any mark between 100 and 119 – a 20-mark range. If a centre estimated a score of 100–106 (approx.) this would be in the bottom range, a score of 107–113 (approx.) would be middle, and a score of 114–119 (approx.) would be top.

These two key pieces of information will enable CCEA to issue the fairest possible results. Please note that it will not be necessary to place candidates in rank order in each band. This approach recognises the diversity of learning areas in an Occupational Studies' pathway.

Exam centres will receive detailed guidance from CCEA awarding organisation on how it will collect these grades and the top, middle or bottom band information. This process will be as clear and straightforward as possible for Heads of Centre and their staff.

CCEA will provide detailed instructions about how and when to submit the data as soon as possible. However, we recognise that Heads of Centre and teachers/lecturers need some certainty so that they can plan this work with their teams, so we confirm that the deadline for submitting data to CCEA will be no earlier than **29 May 2020**.

### Approach to Awarding Occupational Studies Levels 1 and 2 Grades

This document applies to Occupational Studies Levels 1 and 2 **only**. We do not anticipate the need for an additional Occupational Studies series. We are currently working on the assumption that CCEA will operate its normal Occupational Studies timetable for January 2021 and Summer 2021.

CCEA will award a grade to learners who have applied for an overall qualification and have completed, or entered for, both units associated with this qualification. The grade will be calculated based on both centre assessment grades and statistical data as outlined in this document. Learners dissatisfied with grades provided in Summer 2020 will have the opportunity to enter Occupational Studies unit(s) in a future series. If learners choose to sit unit(s) in a subsequent series, the higher grade from either the 2020 calculated grade or the grade achieved in the subsequent series will stand.

Learners with entries for units, but no cash-in for an overall qualification in Summer 2020 will not be awarded a uniform mark. For those learners, there will be two options. They can choose to sit only the unit they planned to take in 2021, and the unit they entered for in Summer 2020 will have a mark calculated using statistical predictions based on their performance in the 2021 unit. As a result, an overall grade will be awarded. Or, learners can choose to sit both units in 2021 – however, the unit entered in 2020 will still have a statistical score calculated, and the higher mark will count towards the grade in 2021.

This document provides further information for Heads of Centre, heads of department and teachers/lecturers about how to generate these grades and the evidence that should be considered.

The centre assessment grades submitted to CCEA must reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade a learner would have achieved if they had completed both units to be counted towards an overall qualification in Summer 2020. Heads of Centre should emphasise the need for judgements to be objective and fair.

In the interests of fairness to learners, judgements made by teachers/lecturers should be consistent. So that the final grades awarded are as fair as possible, CCEA will standardise the judgements within and across different centres once they have been submitted using a statistical methodology agreed with CCEA Regulation.

For every Occupational Studies overall qualification, CCEA will require each centre to submit the following information:

- A **centre assessment grade** for each qualification for each learner – the judgement submitted to CCEA by the Head of Centre about the grade that each learner is most likely to have achieved if they had completed both units needed to count towards an award. This professional judgement is derived from evidence that is held within the centre(s) and which has been reviewed by teachers and/or lecturers involved in course delivery.
- For each centre assessment grade, we are asking the centre to assess if the learner would have been expected to be in the top, middle or bottom band of this grade.

### Centre Assessment Grades and Top, Middle or Bottom Bands

Centre assessment grades should be based on a holistic professional judgement across the two units being studied for an award, balancing the different sources of evidence. If the learner is taking units with different teachers/lecturers or classes within the centre, then teachers/lecturers should consult, view all available evidence on both units and decide on an overall grade at qualification level. They should then decide on the top, middle or bottom band within the grade for each learner.

Where a learner is taking units at different centres or campuses, it is the responsibility of the administration centre (the centre that made the overall qualification entry) to co-ordinate the collection of, and supply CCEA with, the centre assessed grades and bands. This will involve consulting with teachers/lecturers in other centres or campuses (the teaching centre(s)) to arrive at a final representative grade and band for each learner. Where there is more than one teacher/lecturer, they will need to agree on a grade and band for all learners who wish to achieve an overall Occupational Studies qualification. To do this, teachers/lecturers will need to come to a shared view of the standard being applied. We recognise that this will be challenging for some centres and in some subjects, and in the current circumstances. However, this internal standardisation is important for the statistical standardisation process.

We want heads of department and teachers/lecturers to consider each learner's performance. Considerations can include any outcomes in this qualification issued by CCEA in a previous examination series. From their considerations, we want teachers/lecturers to make an objective judgement of the grade each learner would have been most likely to get if they had completed all units and assessments required for the qualification this summer. This could include U (unclassified). In coming to this holistic judgement, centres should assume that it is no easier or harder for a learner to achieve a particular grade this year compared to previous years.

Teachers and lecturers should draw on all existing records and available evidence (as far as possible in the context of current public health advice). It is important that the judgements are objective, and they should only take account of the evidence about learner performance. This may include the following, where it is available:

- Records of each learner's performance throughout their study, including for example progress review data or classwork.

- Performance in any coursework and/or tasks required for the qualification, even if this has not been fully completed. You should not ask learners to complete their coursework, and you do not need to submit marks for any completed coursework. In case learners decide that they want to enter in a subsequent exam series, you should retain any coursework/controlled assessment.
- Marks for any units completed in a previous series.
- Performance in any class work or homework and mock assessments taken throughout the course of study.
- Previous results for your centre in this occupational area – these may vary according to several factors, including past performance of learners (over the last 3 years, where possible), but data shows that for most centres any year on year variation in results for a given subject is normally quite small.
- The performance of this year's learners compared to those in the previous 3 years.
- Any other relevant information that provides objective evidence of educational attainment within the subject.

Given the timing of the announcement, we recognise that centres will have incomplete evidence and that the range and amount of evidence will vary between different units and occupational areas. Judgements should be made on the available evidence.

There is no requirement to set additional homework tasks for determining a centre assessment grade, and no learner should be disadvantaged if they are unable to complete any work set after schools/colleges and other exam centres were closed. Where learners have completed additional work after school closures, Heads of Centre should exercise caution where that evidence suggests a change in performance. In many cases, it is likely to reflect the learner's circumstances and context.

There will be no requirement to send any supporting evidence to CCEA, such as learner work. However, centres should retain records of this work, any written reasoning and any annotated work or notes made in reaching a centre assessment grade for each learner. CCEA awarding organisation may elect to request and inspect supporting evidence at its discretion.

### **Access Arrangements and Special Consideration**

Where learners have agreed reasonable adjustments or access arrangements, the judgement should take account of likely achievement with the reasonable adjustment/access arrangement in place.

Special consideration requests, if a learner is unable to take an assessment or suffers a traumatic event that might affect their performance, will not apply this summer. Instead, judgements should reflect how learners would have performed under ordinary circumstances. Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in work completed in class, centres should bear that in mind when making their judgements.

## Private Candidates

Private candidates are learners who have not been taught in the centre because they might be home-schooled or be following distance-learning programmes or studying independently.

Where centres have accepted entries from private candidates, those learners should be included where the Head of Centre is confident that they and their staff have seen sufficient evidence of the learner's achievement to make an objective judgement.

We are urgently exploring whether there are alternative options for those learners who do not have an existing relationship with a centre and who need results this summer for progression purposes. Unfortunately, this is unlikely to be possible for all private candidates, some of whom may need to take assessments in the next available series to get their grade. We appreciate this is a matter of real concern to private candidates and will provide an update as soon as possible. Centres should submit centre assessment grades for all learners for whom they are confident that they can make a judgement. This will be a decision for the Head of Centre.

The Head of Centre should communicate their decision to any private learners and take advice from CCEA awarding organisation where cases are not straightforward. It will be important for centres to make sure that their entries are complete and accurate, as grades will only be issued for those learners who have been appropriately entered.

## Approval of Grades and Bands

Each set of centre assessment grades and bands within these grades must be signed off by at least two teachers/lecturers or, where there is only one teacher or only one available, by the teacher and the Head of Centre.

Where a staff member might have a personal interest in the performance of a learner (for example as a relative), this must be disclosed to the Head of Centre. The Head of Centre must make appropriate arrangements to ensure any perceived or actual conflict of interests is appropriately addressed.

## Head of Centre Approval and Declaration

The Head of Centre will be required to confirm that the centre assessment grades and the bands within each grade are a true representation of authentic learner performance. In cases where all units are completed at a different centre from the administration centre, this may be completed by the Head of the teaching centre but **MUST be forwarded to the administration centre, who will supply the information to CCEA**. If the Head of Centre is unavailable to do this, the Board of Governors may delegate a deputy Head of Centre. However, the Board of Governors should notify CCEA of this change. In reviewing these centre assessment grades, the Head of Centre should consider the distribution of the centre assessment grades in comparison to grades achieved by the centre in up to the previous 3 years.

The Head of Centre will be required to submit the following declaration when the data is submitted.

*I confirm that these centre assessment grades and the band placements of learners are accurate and represent the professional judgements made by staff and that entries were appropriate for each learner. Having reviewed the relevant processes and data, I am confident that they honestly and fairly represent the grades that these learners would have been most likely to achieve if they had completed all assessments as planned, and they have not been disclosed to either the learner or their parent/guardian/carer. I understand that CCEA will conduct a statistical standardisation exercise and that, if the profile of grades submitted is substantially different from what might be expected, based on my centre's results in up to the previous 3 years, where available, and the prior attainment of this year's learners, the grades for my centre will be adjusted to bring them into line with overall standards.*

## Statistical Standardisation

Once centre assessment grades have been submitted, CCEA will carry out a process, being developed with Regulation, to statistically standardise the grades within and between different centres. For this to be as fair as possible, the grade and top, middle or bottom band allocated to the learner must be as accurate as possible.

The statistical model will be designed to standardise grades within and across centres in each occupational area and is being developed by CCEA in conjunction with other awarding organisations and examination regulators.

We will continue to work with technical and statistical experts to develop this model, which will combine a range of evidence including:

- expected grade distributions at full CCEA cohort level; and
- results in up to previous 3 years, where available, at individual centres.

The statistical standardisation will align the judgements within and across centres, so that, as far as possible, your learners are not unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged this summer. This means that the centre assessment grades you submit and the final calculated grades that learners receive could be different.

## How to Submit Information

CCEA is currently working to adapt its IT systems to collect this data in a way that is as straightforward as possible for the centre. The final deadline for submission of data will be specified by CCEA. It will not be earlier than **29 May 2020**.

When the IT system is completed, CCEA awarding organisation will issue instructions on how to submit information.

Centres can begin to work to generate centre assessed grades and bands within these grades, but they will not be able to submit data until further instruction is provided.

**If centres do not submit the required information about a learner, it will not be possible to provide an award for that learner.**

## Entries

CCEA awarding organisation will work with centres to finalise entry data as early as possible this year. It is essential to the process of calculating grades that the entry files are accurate and finalised before centres submit centre assessed grades and bands within these grades. CCEA awarding organisation will convey further information about entries or changes as soon as possible.

## Sharing Data with Learners, Parents and Carers

During the grading process described in this guidance note, and in advance of the issue of results, centres must not share the centre assessment grades nor the bands within these grades submitted with learners, their parents/carers, or any other individuals outside the centre. The Head of Centre should ensure that the confidentiality of this data is protected within the centre and only shared with those staff where there is an absolute need to do so. This is to protect the integrity of the teachers'/lecturers' judgements and to avoid teachers/lecturers, Heads of Centre or heads of department being put under pressure by, for example, learners and parents, to submit a grade that is not supported by the evidence. Since the final grades for some, or all, learners could be different from those submitted, it also helps to manage learners' expectations.

Notwithstanding these confidentiality requirements, data subjects (learners) can request a copy of their personal data under article 15 of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). However, in respect of personal data such as exam marks or other information processed by a data controller to determine results, an exemption from disclosure exists under paragraph 25 (2) of schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 2018. This exemption allows Data Controllers (in this case centres) to delay disclosure of such information until after results have been published to the learners.

CCEA awarding organisation will send its instructions to centres as soon as possible and once the centre assessment grades have been submitted to CCEA, the process to produce the final grades will commence. More information will be made available to teachers/lecturers, learners, parents and carers at the time results are issued, to facilitate any appeals.

## Arrangements for Appeals

Under the circumstances, the normal arrangements for reviews of marking and appeals will not apply. We are considering what arrangements might be put in place to allow an effective appeal.

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the data submitted to CCEA as part of this process is correct.

## Additional Assessment Opportunities

Learners who feel that their grades from the summer do not reflect their ability will be able to take assessments at the next available opportunity. If they choose to do this, the higher grade stands.

## Malpractice

CCEA will investigate any allegations of acts which are intended to give an unfair advantage in the awarding process or undermine the processes described. The consequences of malpractice remain the same as in previous years.

## Next Steps

Heads of Centre should now arrange to do the following:

- Check entries are complete and correct.
- Contact any private learners to confirm whether the centre will be able to include them in their submission of centre assessment grades and bands within these grades.
- Consider what evidence will be available to teachers/lecturers.
- Begin the work to generate a centre assessment grade and top, middle or bottom band for learners wishing to achieve an overall Occupational Studies qualification, but do not try to submit the data yet.
- Begin arrangements to consult with any other teaching centres where learners are completing units to count towards an overall qualification, to establish a process for collectively deciding on an overall grade and band placement for learners.
- Do not share the grades and/or bands within these grades with learners, parents and carers or other individuals inside and outside the centre who are not part of this process.

CCEA Regulation will enact several changes to its regulations to enable this year's results to be delivered in the changed circumstances, including:

- the principles underpinning the technical model for the statistical standardisation process;
- arrangements for private learners; and
- arrangements for appeals.

**CCEA awarding organisation will provide detailed information to Heads of Centre as soon as possible about how to submit the data.**

## Further Advice and Information

Further advice and information are available through [ccea.org.uk](https://www.ccea.org.uk) – follow the links for COVID-19 information.



