



# **Guide to the Data Submission Process**

For Vocational Quarterly Data Collection



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# **1 Certificates awarded in vocational qualifications**

## **Introduction**

In order to fulfil our regulatory and accreditation functions as set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009<sup>1</sup>, we require awarding organisations to provide aggregate data on the number of full certificates awarded for regulated vocational qualifications (i.e. all qualifications except GCSEs and GCEs) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## **When is the data collected?**

Data is collected on a quarterly basis, in January, April, July and October. The collection window starts immediately the day following the quarter end. This means that the time between the period covered and the reporting date is reported is kept to a minimum.

## **What data is collected?**

We require the numbers of certificates issued in all available vocational qualifications during the relevant calendar quarter, broken down by country.

Certification numbers are mandatory as part of this data collection. This is so that we can monitor trends in qualifications and also gain an understanding of the skills market at country level. This data is also used to inform our day to day regulatory activities.

The number of registrations per qualification is also requested. This is currently voluntary, but likely to become a mandatory field. This data is important to us as an indicator of participation and completion rates. Using this we can predict future trends and steer the direction in the vocational qualifications market.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/contents>

## **How is the data collected?**

Ofqual supplies each awarding organisation a spreadsheet listing the organisation's available qualifications during the relevant calendar period. Awarding organisations are required to complete the spreadsheet by supplying the number of certificates awarded, broken down by country and region (if possible) against each of these qualifications. The number of registrations is also requested, where possible.

An example is given in Section 2 and the specification and format of fields required is shown in Section 3. Definitions of the data are available in Section 4.

If an awarding organisation has prior agreement with Ofqual to send data in an alternative format, they will be sent a separate set of instructions.

## **How your data will be used**

This data will be used to produce official statistics on vocational qualifications which are published to our website every quarter. These statistics are used to raise awareness and understanding, and improve public confidence in regulated qualifications and assessments in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These statistics can also be accessed via the UK National Statistics website (<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/index.html>) which provides a gateway to the latest statistics released daily by government departments in UK.

## **If we do not receive your data**

The return of your information to Ofqual is mandatory. Failure to supply data in a timely and accurate manner will be noted in the official statistics publications. Furthermore, this will also be in breach of the General Conditions of Recognition (Condition B4: Notice to provide information to Ofqual) and may lead to regulatory action.

## **General completion guidelines**

Section 2 gives an example of how a fully completed spreadsheet should look and Section 3 details the field formats required.

The general guidelines for completing the spreadsheet are as follows:

- The information in the spreadsheet supplied by Ofqual should NOT be changed in any way.

- Data should be added to the empty cells in the columns Registration and Certification. **All cells need to be filled with a numerical value otherwise the upload will fail.**
- Registration data is not currently compulsory. If you have data to report, it must be a numerical value with no formatting. If you are not reporting registration data then please add a **'0' (zero)** to each cell in this column.
- Certification data is compulsory. These must be numerical values with no formatting. If you have no certifications to report then please add a **'0' (zero)**.
- Country level data is expected from all awarding organisations, at the very minimum the data should cover full awards made in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. If you have no certifications to report in a particular cell then please add a **'0' (zero)**.
- Region level data is not compulsory. If you are reporting data by region, this should be grouped by the location of the examination centre. If you have no regional figures then please add **'0' (zeros)**.
- Certificates issued for qualifications not listed in the spreadsheet should be added at the end of the spreadsheet. **Please tell the Statistics Team that you have done this.**
- No additional columns should be inserted.
- No columns should be hidden.
- No total figures at the end of columns should be included.
- No leading or trailing blanks or spaces should be included.
- Submissions must be made in CSV format.
- Your data should be submitted via our secure FTP site.

## **Uploaded Data**

When files are uploaded, the data will be validated against a set of validation rules. These are detailed in Section 3 below. If validation is successful, the data is automatically transferred into our systems. At this stage, further validation will be undertaken by Ofqual. If the file is unsuccessful at any stage of validation, it is rejected. If this occurs you will be informed and given a reason for the rejection. Ofqual staff will not alter data once it has been submitted - instead the submission will be rejected to be reloaded by you.

## **Amendments to data**

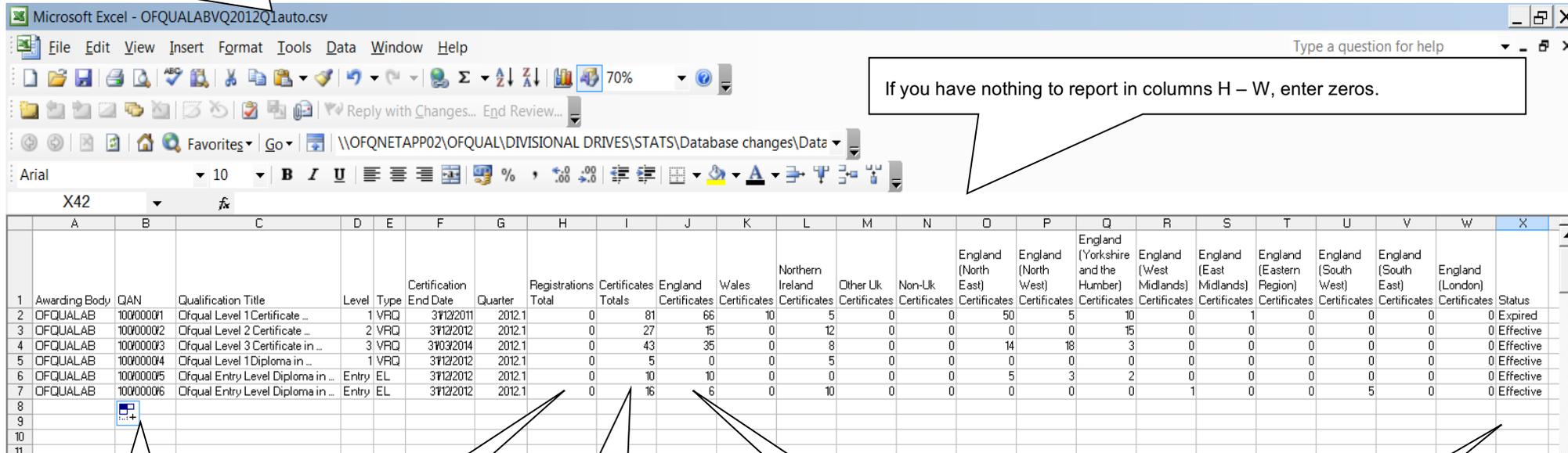
If you find an error or omission after you've had a successful upload, you need to notify us by emailing [data.services@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:data.services@ofqual.gov.uk). Before you can upload a new file we need to reject the existing one.

## **Updates to formats and guidance**

This guidance document will be updated regularly. Any changes to procedure will be incorporated into the guidance document.

## 2 Example

Save the file in the format 'AOAcronymVQ2012Qxauto.csv', where x is the quarter number.  
So in this example, the file will be saved as **OFQUALABVQ2012Q1auto.csv**.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	
	Awarding Body	QAN	Qualification Title	Level	Type	Certification End Date	Quarter	Registrations Total	Certificates Totals	England Certificates	Wales Certificates	Northern Ireland Certificates	Other Uk Certificates	Non-Uk Certificates	England (North East) Certificates	England (North West) Certificates	England (Yorkshire and the Humber) Certificates	England (West Midlands) Certificates	England (East Midlands) Certificates	England (Eastern Region) Certificates	England (South West) Certificates	England (South East) Certificates	England (London) Certificates	Status	
1	OFQUALAB	10000001	Dfqual Level 1 Certificate ...	1	VRQ	3/12/2011	2012.1	0	81	66	10	5	0	0	50	5	10	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	Expired
2	OFQUALAB	10000002	Dfqual Level 2 Certificate ...	2	VRQ	3/12/2012	2012.1	0	27	15	0	12	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Effective
3	OFQUALAB	10000003	Dfqual Level 3 Certificate in ...	3	VRQ	3/03/2014	2012.1	0	43	35	0	8	0	0	14	18	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Effective
4	OFQUALAB	10000004	Dfqual Level 1 Diploma in ...	1	VRQ	3/12/2012	2012.1	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Effective
5	OFQUALAB	10000005	Dfqual Entry Level Diploma in ...	Entry	EL	3/12/2012	2012.1	0	10	10	0	0	0	0	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Effective
6	OFQUALAB	10000006	Dfqual Entry Level Diploma in ...	Entry	EL	3/12/2012	2012.1	0	16	6	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	0	0	Effective

If you have nothing to report in columns H – W, enter zeros.

The values in columns A – G should not be changed

If you have no Registrations to report, fill the column with zeros

The Certificates Total should be the sum of the certificates in the country breakdown (columns J – N)

The England Certificates should be the sum of the certificates in the region breakdown (columns O – W)

The values in Status (column X) should not be changed

### 3 Field formats

Shaded fields require no data entry.

	Field Name	Description	Column	Validation rule	Format	Example	Notes
<b>NO DATA ENTRY REQUIRED</b> - Qualification data supplied by Ofqual	Awarding Body	Name of the awarding organisation	A	Up to 50 characters, cannot be left blank	text	Ofqual	All existing values in the spreadsheet provided by Ofqual should not be altered
	QAN	Qualification Accreditation Number	B	Between 8-10 characters, cannot be left blank	text	601/2977/3	
	Qualification Title	Title of qualification	C	Up to 255 characters, cannot be left blank	text	Ofqual Level 1 Award In Dance	
	Level	Level of qualification	D	One of the following: 1, 1-2, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Entry, A, F, H, P	text	2	
	Type	Type of qualification	E	One of the following: BS, DIP, EL, ESOL, FS, FS NQF, FS QCF, FSMQ, GCE, GCE AS, GCSE, HL, KS, NVQ, OG, OQ, PL, PROJ, QCF, VRQ	text	QCF	
	Certification End Date	The date when the qualification ceases to award certifications	F	Up to 20 characters, cannot be left blank	date (dd/mm/yyyy)	31/12/2012	
	Quarter	The calendar quarter for which data is being collected	G	Up to 6 characters, cannot be left blank	text (yyyy.q)	2012.1	

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	Field Name	Description	Column	Validation rule	Format	Example	Notes
	Registrations total	Number of registrations received in the quarter	H	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	Enter number of registrations or 0 (zero) if none to report
	Certificates Total	Number of certifications awarded in the quarter	I	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	Enter number of certifications or 0 (zero) if none to report
Country level breakdown	England Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England for the quarter	J	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
	Wales Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in Wales for the quarter	K	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
	Northern Ireland Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in Northern Ireland for the quarter	L	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
	Other UK Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in other UK regions for the quarter	M	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
	Non-UK Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in non-UK regions for the quarter	N	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
Regional breakdown	England (North East) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (NE region) for the quarter	O	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
	England (North West) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (NW region) for the quarter	P	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
	England (Yorkshire and the Humber) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (Yorkshire and Humberside region) for the quarter	Q	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	

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Field Name	Description	Column	Validation rule	Format	Example	Notes
England (West Midlands) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (WM region) for the quarter	R	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
England (East Midlands) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (EM region) for the quarter	S	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
England (Eastern Region) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (Eastern region) for the quarter	T	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
England (South West) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (SW region) for the quarter	U	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
England (South East) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (SE region) for the quarter	V	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
England (London) Certificates	Number of certifications awarded in England (London region) for the quarter	W	Number between 0 and 999,999	number	50	
Status	Current status of qualification	X	One of the following: Effective (available for new registrations), Expired (not available for new registrations but can be certificated)	text	Effective	Values should not be altered

## 4 Data definitions

### Certifications

Certificate numbers should only represent certificates issued during the requested period. Any certificates in dispute or under review should only be included in the period during which they are finally issued. This should ensure minimal change in the reported figures.

### Registrations

Registration numbers should represent the total number of candidates registered for the qualification during the period. The point of registration is when a candidate indicates an intention to gain the qualification. For modular qualifications this may be the point where a candidate requests the qualification, having completed the component units

### Quarters

Quarter 1 covers January to March, Quarter 2: April to June, Quarter 3: July to September and Quarter 4 covers October to December.

### Geographical regions

Geographical regions are determined by the location of the assessment/examination centre, according to government office region, as shown in the following table.

Country	Government office region	Area
England	North East	Cleveland
		Durham
		Northumberland
		Tyne and Wear
	North West	Cumbria
		Cheshire
		Greater Manchester
		Lancashire
		Merseyside
	Yorkshire and the Humber	Humberside

Country	Government office region	Area
		North Yorkshire
		South Yorkshire
		West Yorkshire
	East Midlands	Derbyshire
		Leicestershire
		Lincolnshire
		Northamptonshire
		Nottinghamshire
	West Midlands	Hereford and Worcester
		Shropshire
		Staffordshire
		Warwickshire
		West Midlands
	South West	Avon
		Cornwall
		Devon
		Dorset
		Gloucestershire
		Somerset
		Wiltshire
	Eastern region	Cambridgeshire
Norfolk		
Suffolk		
Bedfordshire		
Essex		
Hertfordshire		

Country	Government office region	Area
	South East	Berkshire
		Buckinghamshire
		East Sussex
		Hampshire
		Isle of Wight
		Kent
		Oxfordshire
		Surrey
		West Sussex
	London	Greater London
Wales	Wales	North Wales
		Dyfed-Powys
		South Wales
		Gwent
Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland
Other UK regions	Other UK regions	Scotland
		Orkney Islands
		Shetland Islands
Non-UK	Non-UK	Channel Islands
		Isle of Man
		All other international locations

## **5 Contacts**

For all queries relating to the data collection process, amendments to data previously provided, or for general guidance, please contact:

Data Services  
Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation  
Spring Place  
Coventry Business Park  
Herald Avenue  
Coventry CV5 6UB

[data.services@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:data.services@ofqual.gov.uk)

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