



Open consultation

Annex A – Proposed Conditions, requirements and guidance for V Levels

Published 23 April 2026

Applies to England

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V Level Qualification Level Conditions, requirements and guidance

Introduction

About this document

This document is part of a suite of documents which sets out our regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering V Levels. These conditions and requirements come into effect at [time of publication] on [day and date of publications].

This document sets out the following rules:

- our Qualification Level Conditions for V Levels, which we have set using our powers under [section 134 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009](#), and
- our requirements in relation to V Level assessment strategies, qualification purposes, assessments, grading, and standard setting.

With respect to all V Levels, awarding organisations must also comply with:

- our [General Conditions of Recognition](#), which apply to all awarding organisations and qualifications,
- the relevant V Level Subject Level Conditions, and
- all relevant [Regulatory Documents](#).

Ofqual also sets out guidance in relation to V Level assessments and standard

setting, which is designed to help awarding organisations comply with (a) the Qualification Level Conditions and requirements and (b) the General Conditions of Recognition.

Condition VL1: Interpretation and Definitions

VL1.1

The rules of interpretation and definitions outlined in General Condition J1 shall apply to the V Level Qualification Level Conditions and V Level Subject Level Conditions.

VL1.2

Except in the circumstances described in Condition VL1.3, the requirements imposed by the V Level Qualification Level Conditions and the V Level Subject Level Conditions apply in addition to each other and to the requirements imposed by the General Conditions of Recognition.

VL1.3

To the extent that there is any inconsistency between –

(a) a requirement of a V Level Qualification Level Condition or a V Level Subject Level Condition and an awarding organisation's ability to provide either a particular type of Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration, such that the awarding organisation is prevented from providing that Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration, the awarding organisation may provide that Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration and is not obliged to comply with the requirement of the V Level Qualification Level Condition or the V Level Subject Level Condition,

(b) in all other cases –

(i) a requirement of a V Level Subject Level Condition and a requirement of either a V Level Qualification Level Condition or a General Condition of Recognition, such that an awarding organisation could not comply with both such requirements, the awarding organisation must comply with the requirement of the V Level Subject Level Condition and is not obliged to comply with the requirement of the other Condition, or

(ii) a requirement of a V Level Qualification Level Condition and a requirement of a General Condition of Recognition, such that an awarding organisation could not comply with both such requirements, the awarding organisation must comply with the requirement of the V Level Qualification Level Condition and is not obliged to comply with the requirement of the General Condition of Recognition.

VL1.4

In these Conditions and the V Level Subject Level Conditions, the following words shall have the meaning given to them below (and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly) –

Assessment by Examination

An assessment which is –

(a) set by an awarding organisation,

(b) designed to be taken simultaneously by all relevant Learners at a time determined by the awarding organisation, and

(c) taken under conditions specified by the awarding organisation (including conditions relating to the supervision of Learners during the assessment and the duration of the assessment).

Non-exam Assessment

An assessment which is not an Assessment by Examination.

V Level

A qualification that has been accredited by Ofqual as a V Level under section 139 of the Act.

V Level Qualification Level Condition

A Condition of Recognition that applies to a V Level, except where a V Level Subject Level Condition states that its application is excluded in respect of a specific subject, and which uses the numbering format 'VLn.n', where 'n' denotes a number.

V Level Subject Level Condition

A Condition of Recognition that applies to a V Level in a specific subject only and which uses the numbering format 'VL(x)n.n', where 'x' denotes a particular subject and 'n' denotes a number.

Condition VL2: Disapplication of certain General Conditions of Recognition applying to V Levels

VL2.1

In respect of each V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, the following General Conditions of Recognition do not apply –

- (a) Condition E1.1,
- (b) Condition E1.2, and
- (c) Condition E7.

Condition VL3: Assessment strategies

VL3.1

In respect of each V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –

- (a) establish and maintain an assessment strategy for that qualification,
- (b) ensure that the assessment strategy complies with any requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time, and
- (c) have regard to any guidance in relation to assessment strategies which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

VL3.2

In particular, an awarding organisation must ensure that the assessment strategy for a V Level sets out how the awarding organisation intends to secure, on an ongoing basis, compliance with its Conditions of Recognition in respect of the assessments for that qualification.

VL3.3

An awarding organisation must ensure that all assessments for a V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, are designed, set, delivered and marked in compliance with its assessment strategy for that qualification.

VL3.4

An awarding organisation must –

- (a) keep under review its assessment strategy for a V Level, and revise it where necessary, so as to satisfy itself that the assessment strategy meets at all times the requirements of Conditions VL3.1 and VL3.2,
- (b) review its assessment strategy for a V Level promptly upon receiving a request from Ofqual to do so, and subsequently ensure that its assessment strategy complies with any requirements that Ofqual has communicated to it in writing, and
- (c) promptly notify Ofqual of any revisions made by it to any assessment strategy.

VL3.5

An awarding organisation must –

(a) upon receiving a request from Ofqual to do so, demonstrate to Ofqual's satisfaction that it has complied with its assessment strategy for a V Level in respect of any particular assessment for that qualification, or provide an explanation to Ofqual as to why it has not so complied, and

(b) give effect to any recommendation that Ofqual may make in respect of its compliance with its assessment strategy.

Condition VL4: Purposes

VL4.1

An awarding organisation must ensure that each V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available –

(a) meets the general purposes for such qualifications published by Ofqual and revised from time to time, having regard to any guidance which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time, and

(b) has one or more specific purposes which are consistent with the general purposes.

VL4.2

An awarding organisation must ensure that each V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, is designed so as, where there is a conflict between two or more general purposes such that compliance with one general purpose will reduce the degree to which an awarding organisation can comply with another –

(a) priority is given to the general purposes in accordance with their hierarchy, with the greatest priority being given to compliance with purposes further up the hierarchy, and

(b) without prejudice to Condition VL4.2(a), compliance is secured with all of the general purposes to the greatest extent possible.

Condition VL5: Total Qualification Time

VL5.1

In respect of each V Level that it makes available or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –

(a) design that qualification such that the number of hours for Guided Learning will be in line with any requirements set by the Secretary of State,

(b) assign to that qualification that number hours of Guided Learning, and

(c) assign to that qualification a number of hours for Total Qualification Time by applying the Total Qualification Time Criteria.

Condition VL6: Assessment

VL6.1

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition VL7: Standard setting

VL7.1

An awarding organisation must ensure that the specification for each V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, sets out the specified levels of attainment which comply with any requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

VL7.2

In respect of each V Level that it makes available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time in relation to –

(a) the promotion of consistency between the measurement of Learners' levels of attainment in that qualification and similar qualifications made available by other awarding organisations, and

(b) the setting of specified levels of attainment.

VL7.3

In setting the specified levels of attainment for a V Level which it makes available, an awarding organisation must have regard to an appropriate range of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

VL7.4

In respect of each V Level which it makes available, the range of evidence to which an awarding organisation has regard for the purposes of Condition VL7.3 will only be

appropriate if it includes evidence of –

(a) the Level of Demand of the assessments for that qualification,

(b) the level of attainment demonstrated in those assessments by an appropriately representative sample of Learners taking that qualification,

(c) where appropriate, the level of attainment demonstrated by Learners taking that qualification in –

(i) a prior assessment (which was not for that qualification), whether or not that assessment was for a regulated qualification, or

(ii) a prior qualification, whether or not that qualification was a regulated qualification, and

(d) following the first year in which the qualification is awarded, the level of attainment demonstrated by Learners who have previously been awarded the qualification.

VL7.5

An awarding organisation must maintain a record of –

(a) the evidence to which it has had regard in setting the specified levels of attainment for each V Level which it makes available, and

(b) its rationale for the selection of and weight given to that evidence.

Assessment strategy requirements

Condition VL3.1(a) requires an awarding organisation to establish and maintain an assessment strategy for each V Level which it makes available or proposes to make available. Condition VL3.2 requires an awarding organisation to ensure that the assessment strategy for a V Level sets out how the awarding organisation intends to secure, on an ongoing basis, compliance with its Conditions of Recognition in respect of the assessments for that qualification.

Condition VL3.4 requires an awarding organisation to keep its assessment strategy

under review, and to promptly notify Ofqual of any revisions made to it. An assessment strategy should be treated as a live working document which should be updated as necessary, considering evidence from assessment development, delivery and monitoring, so qualifications and assessments continue to be fit for purpose.

Condition VL3.1(b) requires an awarding organisation to comply with any requirements in relation to assessment strategies published by Ofqual.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition VL3.1(b) below.

General requirements

An assessment strategy for a V Level must provide a comprehensive picture of the steps and approach an awarding organisation will take to secure compliance with its Conditions of Recognition in relation to the design, delivery and marking of assessments for, and the award of, that qualification.

An assessment strategy must clearly set out how an awarding organisation will ensure its V Level is fit for purpose in line with Condition D1.1. In doing so, the strategy must: –

- provide a clear and well-structured explanation of the overall approach
- explain the rationale behind key design and delivery decisions, supported by relevant evidence or examples where appropriate
- explain the risks and trade-offs in the approach and the mitigations for those risks

An assessment strategy must explain how an awarding organisation will ensure that the qualification, and the assessments for it, are fit for purpose. In particular, it must include information and evidence to show how an awarding organisation promotes and acts on feedback between the different stages of the qualification lifecycle to keep its approach under continuous review, making improvements where appropriate, to ensure the assessments for the qualification continue to be high-quality and fit for purpose.

Assessment strategy structure

It is up to an awarding organisation to decide how to structure its assessment strategy. The assessment strategy is a live document that must be used and updated throughout the lifetime of the qualification. An awarding organisation should

structure it in a way that supports this.

In doing this an awarding organisation may, for example, choose to develop separate parts of its assessment strategy that:

- are generic to a qualification type or to all of its qualifications (for example, all of its V Levels),
- apply to suites of related or similar qualifications (for example, its V Levels in a particular overall subject area), and
- are specific to an individual qualification (for example, a V Level in a particular subject).

The separate parts of the assessment strategy could be presented as separate documents, or as a main document with annexes. An awarding organisation should explain clearly how any separate parts of an assessment strategy relate to each other. It should also explain how each of these separate parts will be kept under review, and revised where necessary, in light of the others. Taken together, such parts should form a coherent and integrated whole.

Detailed requirements

We set out below our detailed requirements on the specific information and evidence an awarding organisation must include in its assessment strategy. The amount of information and evidence that can be included may vary across the areas identified, depending on the relevant point in the qualification's lifecycle to which a particular area pertains and the extent to which Ofqual has determined the regulatory approach in relation to a particular issue.

These detailed requirements are intended to indicate the minimum information that an assessment strategy must include. They are not intended to provide a template specifying the form that it must take, since the optimal structure and content of an assessment strategy will depend on the approach that is being proposed by an awarding organisation.

These requirements are divided into two sections. Each of these is further divided into subsections which follow, broadly, the key phases of the qualification lifecycle. There is also a specific scheme of assessment section in the individual qualification section.

Information that is applicable in general to a suite or qualification type:

- Qualification development
- Assessment development
- Qualification and assessment delivery
- Qualification and assessment monitoring

Information that is applicable to a specific individual qualification:

- Qualification design
- Assessment design
- Qualification and assessment delivery
- Qualification and assessment monitoring
- Scheme of Assessment

Assessment strategies should give examples, as appropriate, to support any points or arguments made within the document (for example, questions, tasks and mark schemes). Assessment strategies should also refer, as appropriate, to existing policies or procedures to support an awarding organisation in demonstrating how it will seek to ensure that the qualification meets the requirements in the Conditions in relation to assessments (for example, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policies).

General to a suite or qualification type

Qualification development

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation complies with relevant Conditions of Recognition and statutory requirements when developing qualifications. This should include a description of how an awarding organisation engages with appropriate Users and how it uses evidence gathered from Users, such as employers, higher education institutions and schools and colleges, when it develops qualifications.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important for an awarding organisation to show how it has considered views from Users of the qualifications in ensuring that they can meet their intended purposes.

Assessment development

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation's approach to developing assessments for qualifications ensures that it meets its regulatory requirements, including:

- the principles an awarding organisation uses to underpin the development of valid assessments
- how an awarding organisation has considered the 'Guidance for designing and developing accessible assessments' in the development of their assessments

Describes the systems and process in place to support development of assessments, including:

- the different stages and personnel involved
- the approach to training individuals who will be responsible for setting assessments, including ensuring security and mitigating any Conflicts of Interest
- how an awarding organisation ensures that assessment developers have the assessment expertise required to design questions or tasks and mark schemes that will promote Validity and Reliability
- how an awarding organisation specifies and commissions questions or tasks and mark schemes
- whether and how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is used for developing assessments
- how an awarding organisation quality assures or controls question or task and mark scheme development
- how assessments are quality assured and reviewed before being taken by Learners
- how an awarding organisation engages with a suitable range of equality groups and minimises unintended bias
- where appropriate, details of how employer representatives have been engaged in the development process

Demonstrates how, when producing Assessments by Examination, an awarding organisation ensures that it meets regulatory requirements, such as weightings for assessment objectives and coverage of subject content.

Demonstrates how Non-exam Assessment tasks are set and undertaken to ensure the requirements within and across Centres are consistent and that the assessment objectives and subject content are appropriately targeted.

Explains how an awarding organisation ensures that there are no significant overlaps

between assessments and any course materials or guidance that it has produced or endorsed.

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation has considered the Manageability of assessments for Centres. This should include a description of the factors that impact on the Manageability of the assessments for Centres and how those have been considered.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

The design of Assessments by Examination must be justified in relation to their:

- alignment with the purposes of the qualification
- effectiveness in assessing the knowledge, understanding and skills set out in the content
- conduciveness to achieving Reliable outcomes for Learners

It is important that an awarding organisation demonstrates how the Non-exam Assessment maximises assessment Validity and what the key threats to Reliability and Validity are, and how these have been mitigated. In particular, how the awarding organisation has considered any threat posed by Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the steps taken to prevent the occurrence of malpractice involving AI.

Qualification and assessment delivery

Marking/assessing performance

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation promotes accurate and consistent marking by giving details of standardisation procedures and any wider training for examiners/Assessors and explaining their effectiveness.

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation promotes accurate and consistent marking by giving details of:

- how marking processes will operate, including who carries out the marking, i.e. the awarding organisation and/or Centres, any different systems used and the role of automated marking systems and Artificial Intelligence (for quality assurance) if applicable
- any variation between assessments in relation to these processes
- any principles used to guide the selection of marking systems for assessments with different properties, for example, different question types
- processes to monitor marking quality (and issuing of results) and take remedial

action where necessary

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation promotes consistency of standards within and across Centres through its Moderation of Non-exam Assessments by giving details of:

- its sampling regime, including sample sizes, tolerances and any evidence which shows the robustness of its approach
- how it determines and applies any adjustments to Centre-marked assessments

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation promotes effective Centre marking of Non-exam Assessments to ensure they discriminate effectively between Learners by giving details of the approach to guidance and training for Centres, including the nature and frequency of training opportunities and whether these are mandatory or optional.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

An awarding organisation must justify its approach to marking, monitoring and Moderation in relation to the qualification purposes and the need for accurate and Reliable outcomes.

An awarding organisation must describe its approach to training and standardising Assessors (both external Assessors and Centre Assessors). This could include, for example, any specific training for new or senior Assessors, as well as any wider training available. An awarding organisation must describe its standardisation procedures, including, for example, how it will determine whether an Assessor can assess reliably.

Administering assessments

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation effectively administers assessments by giving details of:

- how it ensures the secure transmission, distribution and storage (including by Centres) of materials
- how it has considered Centre and system capacity and ensures Centre readiness where on-screen assessments are used
- how it ensures the proper conduct of assessments by Centres, including where Learners are permitted to have access to assessment materials before assessments are taken
- how it will minimise the opportunities for and address any malpractice or

maladministration by Centres

For assessments which may be adapted by Centres, details of:

- the extent to which Centres will be permitted, or required, to adapt assessments set by an awarding organisation
- monitoring that is in place to ensure that the awarding organisation has visibility of any modifications and their appropriateness and when checks take place, i.e. before or after assessments have been taken
- the support offered to ensure these assessments are Valid and fit for purpose
- how an awarding organisation will manage their responsibilities under equalities law

Details of the approach to guidance and training for Centres around adapting assessments, including the nature and frequency of training opportunities and whether these are mandatory or optional.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

Inadequate approaches to security can undermine Reliability – if, for example, assessment scores do not accurately reflect Learners' attainment.

It is important that an awarding organisation ensures that it demonstrates its approach for all modes of assessment, including for any on-screen assessments that might be provided to Centres and taken by Learners electronically so that particular risks, including technical failure, are appropriately managed and mitigated.

It is important that an awarding organisation details any specific risks considered about the level of responsibility delegated to Centres in quality assuring adaptations to assessments.

Standard setting and maintenance

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation sets and maintains appropriate grading [\[footnote 1\]](#) standards in line with the prescribed regulatory approach and promotes Comparability between awarding organisations and over time by giving details of:

- how the awarding organisation is able to generate and evaluate the range of evidence likely to be appropriate for standard setting and maintenance, including the roles involved
- how the awarding organisation intends to ensure that all personnel involved

understand the approach to standard setting and maintaining, including how evidence is to be used and prioritised

Demonstrates how decisions from the standards setting and maintenance process are subject to appropriate internal scrutiny and governance within an awarding organisation, including details of the personnel roles involved in this process.

Demonstrates how decisions in relation to standards setting and maintenance promote Comparability, over time and between awarding organisations, and are kept under review by giving details of:

- how Comparability between different versions of assessments and different modes of assessment (i.e. on-screen versus paper-based) is ensured, both where these are available at the same time and on an ongoing basis
- how evidence generated in line with any requirements set by Ofqual in relation to inter-awarding organisation Comparability will be used to inform decisions on standard setting

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

An awarding organisation must justify its approach to effectively setting and maintaining appropriate grading standards within the qualification, both over time and with similar qualifications it makes available. Where possible, an awarding organisation must also demonstrate how it will effectively set and maintain standards with similar qualifications offered by other awarding organisations.

It is important the approach to standard setting and maintaining:

- includes full consideration of the strengths and limitations of the different types of available evidence, and the weight given to different evidence
- leads to securing fair and Reliable outcomes over time and between Learners

It is important to ensure that standards are maintained when there are multiple modes of assessment.

An awarding organisation must describe how it ensures Comparability between different modes of assessment, for example when assessments are set, marked and assessed, including any separate awarding processes.

Attainment and reporting

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation aggregates results for individual assessment Components in line with regulatory requirements and in a manner that is

technically sound, using a uniform mark scale.

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation deals with Reviews of Marking, Moderation and Appeals (RoMMA) to ensure that concerns over the accuracy of marking and/or Moderation are addressed adequately and appropriately by giving details of:

- how they are investigated fairly, thoroughly and in a timely fashion, and the associated fees
- how justified concerns over inaccuracy are resolved by following an appropriate process

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

The approach must be justified in relation to the content and purposes of the qualification.

An appropriate aggregation method is needed to ensure appropriate discrimination between Learners, so their overall qualification result fairly and Validly reflects their performance at Component level.

An appropriate process is fundamental to ensuring that appropriate inferences are drawn from results.

Qualification and assessment monitoring

Details of the data that will be collected to monitor the delivery and ongoing performance of the qualification.

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation ensures that any qualification or Component-level data that may be required by Ofqual can be provided within a reasonable time, including details of the systems and procedures in place to support this.

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation monitors how assessments function as a whole by giving details of:

- how it collects metrics to monitor how well the assessments function, such as Component-to-subject correlation
- how it uses these metrics to monitor or support assessment design and support Validity

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation monitors how individual assessments

function by giving details of:

- how it collects metrics to be used to monitor how individual assessments function, such as: spread of marks; grade boundary position; and correlation of assessment Component marks with other measures of performance
- how it uses these metrics to monitor or support assessment design and support Validity

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation monitors how questions or tasks function by giving details of:

- the metrics it collects, such as facility indices, discrimination indices and performance for different subgroups of the entry in terms of performance
- how it uses these metrics to monitor or support assessment design and support Validity

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation monitors Reliability and accuracy of grading classification by giving details of:

- how it collects metrics, such as Reliability coefficients and grading classification accuracy statistics, estimated at Component and subject level where the assessment framework permits
- how it uses these metrics to monitor or support assessment design and support Validity

Describes techniques and measures used to monitor and risk assess key aspects of the qualification that may affect its Validity, for example:

- security or malpractice issues or incidents, including those related to use of Artificial Intelligence
- feedback through engagement with Users of the qualification
- how an awarding organisation assesses whether any aspect of the qualification may be disadvantaging a group of Learners who share a Characteristic

Demonstrates how an awarding organisation feeds monitoring outcomes back into qualification and assessment development by giving details of:

- the processes through which it monitors key aspects including the quality of assessments, susceptibility to malpractice and maladministration and standard setting and maintenance processes

- how the assessment approach is kept under review and, where applicable, refined over time, based on evidence of its effectiveness
- the sources of evidence and feedback included when reviewing the effectiveness of a qualification

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important to have appropriate processes in place to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the qualification, using data at relevant points in qualification development, to maintain its ongoing Validity.

Failure to consider the ongoing Validity of the qualification increases the likelihood of threats manifesting themselves and/or assessment processes ceasing to remain fit for purpose.

Specific to an individual qualification

Qualification design

Purposes

Demonstrates how the qualification fulfils the general purposes specified under Condition VL4.

Details the specific purposes of the qualification and demonstrates how it fulfils those purposes.

Details of any competing purposes, what trade-offs have been considered and how these have been resolved.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

A clear purpose will ensure that Users of the qualification are not misled.

Considering the relative importance of the purposes in terms of the intended priority order set out in Condition VL4 is likely to aid an effective qualification design process by informing the range of trade-offs required when making design decisions.

Subject requirements and approach

Demonstrates that the qualification meets the subject requirements, including coverage of subject content, targeting of assessment objectives and balance of

types of assessment which must comprise specific proportions of Assessment by Examination and Non-exam Assessment:

- includes a mapping grid of specification content against subject content
- includes a mapping grid of assessment Components against assessment objectives, including weightings of each
- describes how the qualification meets any specific structural requirements

Demonstrates that the qualification supports any subject aims and objectives for the course of study.

Describes the approach to amplification of the subject content, where required, and how it ensures that this is appropriately demanding for the qualification, and consistent with the qualification size.

Includes a rationale for any optional routes through the qualification, including details of any optional content and, where applicable, the difference between specifications offered in the same subject, and explains how such optional routes will be comparable in terms of the Level of Demand and the amount of subject content required to be taught and on which Learners will be assessed.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

Poorly defined qualification content can lead to:

- Learners being insufficiently prepared for assessments
- the development of assessments and assessment criteria or mark schemes that fail to appropriately target
- the qualification failing to meet one or more of its general or specific purposes

It is important for an awarding organisation to provide clear, coherent and consistent mapping or tracking grids to show how the subject content and assessment objectives have been covered in the qualification. If there are multiple grids, then it will be important to understand if/how they interrelate and that they portray the information in a clear and consistent way, for example, the level of granularity in the mapping between documents.

The presence of optional routes may have implications for content coverage (for example, where one or more routes may omit key elements of the content).

Where optional routes are included, the awarding organisation must explain its

rationale for including them and how it has determined the content for each optional route. This may include justification as to how different routes represent a comparable Level of Demand and volume.

An awarding organisation must explain how it has determined the content for each optional route.

Demand

Details of the steps taken to ensure that the Level of Demand of the qualification content is set appropriately.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

An awarding organisation must demonstrate that it has considered the Level of Demand of the qualification in relation to the target group(s) and, where appropriate, to other qualifications at the same level.

Progression

Identifies qualifications from which, and to which, Learners will be likely to progress, and explains how this is supported.

Demonstrates that Users support the qualification.

Provides feedback from Users about the qualification.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important for an awarding organisation to demonstrate that the qualification can support the intended progression routes.

Assessment design

Assessment times

Includes total assessment time, and a rationale for this.

Includes individual assessment time for each Component, and a rationale for these, including how the time allowed is sufficient for Learners to complete the assessments.

Where more than one assessment is used in a Component, includes the assessment time for each assessment, and a rationale for these.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

An awarding organisation must justify how the total assessment time and individual assessment time for each assessment is appropriate in terms of covering the required subject content effectively, supporting Validity and balancing Reliability and Manageability.

Assessment structure and type

Details of how assessments will be structured and a rationale for the approach, for example in terms of covering the required subject content effectively, supporting Validity, and balancing Reliability and Manageability. For example:

- number of assessments
- number of tasks or questions in an assessment
- number of sections in an assessment
- number of assessments in a Component
- relative weightings of assessments
- approach to differentiating for the available grade range
- how different elements of the content are targeted by the different assessments
- rationale for determining the method(s) of assessment (for example, a written or practical examination)
- balance between the method(s) of assessment
- consideration of Characteristics
- consideration of the range of Reasonable Adjustments that might be required and would be appropriate for the qualification
- that the specific modes of assessment to be used are appropriate to the construct being measured and comply with regulatory requirements

Explains how the approach to the assessments overall has considered and mitigated any risks of negative impact on teaching and learning.

Determines the level of adaptability of any sample assessments (for example, assignment briefs), and a rationale for this.

Demonstrates that where the same assessments are used over time, how risks relating to predictability and malpractice are managed.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

An awarding organisation must justify how the key structural aspects of the

assessment have been designed to be:

- consistent with the purposes of the qualification
- appropriate in relation to the content
- conducive to the development of robust standard setting and standards maintenance processes

It is important to demonstrate how Comparability is assured in relation to any Centre adaptation (or similar) of assessments set by the awarding organisation.

Optional assessment

Where applicable, includes details of any elements of the assessments that are optional.

Where applicable, explains how Comparability of optional routes will be appropriately ensured.

Where appropriate, explains how the approach to optional elements in the assessments has considered and mitigated any risks of negative impact on teaching and learning.

Where appropriate, explains how any risks of Centres and students navigating optionality incorrectly will be addressed.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important to ensure that standards are maintained when there are optional routes.

Number of marks

Includes the number of marks overall and for each individual Component, and a rationale for those numbers of marks.

Explains how the number of marks supports differentiation for the available grade range.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

An awarding organisation must justify how the number of marks for each individual assessment is appropriate in terms of covering the required subject content effectively, supporting Validity and balancing Reliability and Manageability.

Generating outcomes at assessment and qualification level

Explains the approach to generating outcomes for individual assessments, including how Learners' attainment for each Component is determined, and aggregated to reflect Learners' attainment in the qualification as a whole.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important to ensure that the approach to generating outcomes:

- is in line with the purposes of the qualification and the aspects of the content that it is assessing.
- discriminates effectively between Learners of different abilities
- enables awarding organisations to monitor and control standards

Coverage of subject content

Explains the approach to coverage of the subject content, including:

- coverage of the content, overall and in each assessment
- sampling of the content
- approach to coverage of content over time, including over what period the full subject content will be sampled and how this is tracked and monitored
- how the risk of predictability will be minimised
- how the Level of Demand will be set and maintained
- how Learners' interests will be protected if there are changes to content

Demonstrates that the division of subject content across assessment Components supports Valid assessment and adheres to any regulatory requirements.

Demonstrates how the questions or tasks in a single assessment and over a number of consecutive assessment series will represent a sufficient sampling of the subject content.

Demonstrates the subject content structure across Components is logical and coherent. This should include how the division of subject content across Components supports synoptic assessment where required.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

A sampling methodology must demonstrate adequate coverage of the full range of content both over time and in relation to individual assessments.

It is important for an awarding organisation to provide clear, coherent and consistent mapping or tracking grids to show how the subject content has been covered in the assessments. If there are multiple grids, then it will be important to understand if/how they interrelate and that they portray the information in a clear and consistent way, for example, the level of granularity in the mapping between documents.

Assessment objectives

Includes assessment objectives and weightings, with a rationale for the selected weighting where a range is permitted.

Includes the approach to assessment objectives and weightings, ensuring:

- adherence to any regulatory requirements
- assessment objectives are appropriately aligned to the subject content being assessed within different Components
- the balance of assessment objectives across Components supports Valid assessment
- questions and tasks in a single assessment appropriately target assessment objectives
- assessment objectives are appropriately targeted over a number of consecutive assessment series

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important for an awarding organisation to achieve accurate and consistent targeting of the assessment objectives so that the Level of Demand and focus of the assessment is comparable over time and between awarding organisations.

It is important for an awarding organisation to provide clear, coherent and consistent mapping or tracking grids to show how the assessment objectives have been covered in the assessments.

Question/task types and mark schemes

Includes for each assessment:

- an explanation of the range and balance of question or task types to be used (for example multiple-choice, short answer, extended response, practical observation), how these will credit the full range of target Learners and promote effective discrimination between them to support Valid assessment of the subject content

- the principles by which the mark scheme for each question or task has been developed, including their correlation to question or task requirements, their suitability to credit the full range of target Learners and promote effective discrimination between them and, how they are utilised to ensure the Reliability of judgements.
- how the questions or tasks and mark schemes used will promote (as far as possible, bearing in mind Validity requirements) the Reliability of marking, including accuracy and consistency
- how the questions or tasks in a single assessment and over a number of consecutive assessment series will mitigate predictability, such as in terms of what they target, how they are expressed and any associated Stimulus Materials

Provides as part of its assessment strategy examples of questions/tasks and associated mark schemes, representing the range to be used in assessments, with commentaries explaining the approaches and illustrating how questions/tasks and mark schemes will be constructed in assessments. These examples may or may not be drawn from any related sample assessment materials.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

Poorly designed assessments could impact on their ability to elicit Reliable information regarding the proficiency of Learners.

Question and task Validity

Details of the steps taken to ensure that questions/tasks elicit the assessment evidence they ought to elicit and provides evidence relating to their intended Validity, including how they are designed to target their intended demands and intended level of difficulty, as well as promote accessibility and Minimising Bias. For example, how an awarding organisation ensures that:

- each question/task elicits its intended learning outcomes
- Learners understand what each question/task is asking them to do
- bias and other construct irrelevant factors are minimised
- Learners have sufficient time to complete questions/tasks
- the intended level of difficulty is appropriate and how this has been established
- accessibility has been promoted
- Minimising Bias has been achieved

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its

assessment strategy?

Poorly designed assessments could impact on their ability to elicit Reliable information regarding the proficiency of Learners.

Availability of assessments

Details the approach to availability of assessments, including:

- number of assessments to be available (for example, if available in different modes)
- scheduling of assessment series in each academic year
- approach to Learners retaking assessments

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

An awarding organisation must:

- justify its approach in relation to the purpose of the assessment.
- detail specific risks that have been identified (such as to the Comparability, predictability and security of assessments), and how these have been mitigated

Controls on taking assessments

Details of the controls to be in place for taking assessments, including:

- specified Learner access to assessment materials before the assessment is taken
- specified time limits
- support permitted during assessment
- resources permitted during assessment (for example, own notes, open-book, internet, Artificial Intelligence)
- supervision/Invigilation
- permitted collaboration
- the approach to Authenticating work

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important that any controls have been fully considered and specified to ensure assessments are Valid, Reliable and appropriate for the qualification purposes.

Qualification and assessment delivery

Attainment and reporting

Details of how the assessments generate Reliable information in line with the proposed grading.

Details of:

- the characteristics that differentiate Learners who have demonstrated different levels of attainment
- the steps that have been taken to ensure that there is sufficient difference between adjacent levels of attainment

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

The characteristics of the specified levels of attainment must follow clearly from relevant elements of the content.

An awarding organisation's approach to differentiating between adjacent levels of attainment must be justified in terms of the scope to generate Reliable information.

Any further evidence

Presents any further evidence of processes and procedures that are specifically relevant to this qualification rather than common across qualifications and an explanation as to how these are necessary in context of the specific qualification.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important for an awarding organisation to set out any information and evidence that is specific to an individual qualification to show why a specific approach is needed in certain contexts.

Qualification and assessment monitoring

Includes any further evidence of processes and procedures that are specifically relevant to this qualification rather than common across qualifications and explanation as to how these are necessary in context of the specific qualification.

Why is this important and what must an awarding organisation include in its assessment strategy?

It is important for an awarding organisation to set out any information and evidence that is specific to an individual qualification to show why a specific approach is needed in certain contexts.

Scheme of Assessment

The purpose of the scheme of assessment is for an awarding organisation to set out key information about the qualification and the design of the assessments within it.

Awarding organisations must include one or more tables in their assessment strategy document including the aspects set out in the tables below. Where response options are given in the table, these should be used by an awarding organisation in its own table where possible. However, awarding organisations may use alternative response options if more appropriate to their design.

For the qualification overall:

Aspect	Response
Number of Components/ units/ Learners must take	[Enter numerical value]
Number of routes through the specification	[Enter numerical value]

For each individual assessment:

Aspect	Response
Reference, for example, unit code	[Enter text]
Title	[Enter text]
Assessment method, for example written paper or extended assignment	[Enter text]
Is the assessment mandatory or optional?	Mandatory or Optional
Weighting	[Enter percentage]
Duration	[Enter numerical value]
Assessment series availability, for example January and/or June,	[Enter series]
Terminal assessment	Yes or No
Mode of assessment, for example on-	[Enter text]

screen or paper based

Total assessment marks

[Enter numerical value]

Assessment objective weightings

[Enter percentage weighting for each assessment objective]

Qualification purposes

Condition VL4.1(a) allows us to specify requirements in relation to the purposes which a V Level must meet.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition VL4.1(a) below.

General purposes

An awarding organisation must ensure that each V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, meets the following purposes –

- (a) To provide accurate and consistent information concerning Learners' attainment in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills assessed as part of the qualification (General Purpose A).
- (b) To provide information about attainment that can be used in decisions about the selection of Learners for higher study, higher technical training or apprenticeships (General Purpose B).
- (c) To provide Learners with the ability to apply knowledge, understanding and skills to practical work-related activities (General Purpose C).
- (d) To provide Learners with nationally agreed knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to a broad vocational area, in order to prepare them for higher study in a relevant subject area (General Purpose D).
- (e) To provide Learners with nationally agreed knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to a broad vocational area, in order to prepare them for higher technical training and apprenticeships in a relevant subject area (General Purpose E).

(f) To motivate Learners to complete the qualification and to progress to higher study, higher technical training or apprenticeships (General Purpose F).

(g) To provide a basis for schools and colleges to be held accountable for the performance of their Learners (General Purpose G).

Assessment requirements

Condition VL6.1 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to the assessment of V Levels.

We set out the requirements for the purposes of Condition VL6.1 below.

Assessment structure

An awarding organisation must design a V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, to comprise Components that may be assessed at different points during the qualification, the results of which are combined to give an overall result.

Synoptic assessment

In designing and setting the assessments for a V Level which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must ensure that both the Assessments by Examination and the Non-exam Assessments each include questions or tasks which allow Learners to –

(a) demonstrate the ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, understanding and/or skills from across the full course of study

(b) develop responses which allow a Learner to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning – or an equivalent logical sequence, depending on the nature of the task – which is coherent, relevant and effectively structured, and

(c) demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in response to authentic,

vocationally-related contexts and scenarios.

This means that there must be synoptic assessment, drawing on areas of knowledge, understanding and/or skills from across the full course of study, in both the Assessment by Examination and the Non-exam Assessment.

With respect to Condition G1.3, an awarding organisation must ensure that the criteria, against which Learners' performance will be differentiated in each assessment for each V Level, require the allocation of numerical marks based on the level of attainment each Learner has demonstrated.

Assessment by Examination

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each V Level which it makes available –

(a) each Learner completes, during the months of May and/or June in any single year, the Assessments by Examination to be taken for that qualification, and

(b) only one Assessment by Examination series is offered during that time period in each year.

The Subject Level Conditions require that a Learner takes a specified proportion of the overall assessment for a V Level as Assessment by Examination in the assessment series in which the Learner requests certification for the qualification. An awarding organisation must ensure that the results achieved by the Learner in the Assessments by Examination in that series are used in calculating the Learner's overall qualification grade.

Non-exam Assessments

In each academic year, an awarding organisation must offer one submission window for Centres to submit marks for the Non-exam Assessments in a V Level that it makes available.

An awarding organisation must set all Non-exam Assessments for a V Level.

In doing so, the awarding organisation must specify –

(a) the assessment questions or task(s), and

(b) the conditions under which Learners must complete the questions or task(s).

An awarding organisation may permit a Centre to adapt questions or tasks in Non-exam Assessments for the purpose of making those assessments more accessible to Learners.

Marking of assessments

An awarding organisation must ensure that evidence generated by Learners in the Assessments by Examination for a V Level is marked by the awarding organisation or a person connected to it.

Evidence generated by a Learner in a Non-exam Assessment for a V Level may be marked –

(a) by the awarding organisation or a person connected to the awarding organisation,

(b) by a Centre, or

(c) through a combination of (a) and (b).

Retakes

An awarding organisation may allow a Learner to retake an Assessment by Examination for a V Level.

An awarding organisation may allow a Learner to retake a Non-exam Assessment for a V Level through submission, in a new or revised form, of evidence generated by that Learner which he or she has submitted for the purposes of taking the assessment on a previous occasion.

An awarding organisation may permit a Learner to carry forward their mark/moderated mark (scaled as appropriate) for a Non-exam Assessment from a previous attempt at the same V Level awarded by the awarding organisation.

Standard setting requirements

Condition VL7.1 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to the specified levels of attainment that must be used for V Levels.

Condition VL7.2(b) allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to how those specified levels of attainment are set.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Conditions VL7.1 and VL7.2(b) below.

For ease of reference, the specified levels of attainment used in V Levels are referred to below as 'grades'.

Specified levels of attainment for V Levels

In relation to each V Level, an awarding organisation must ensure that the specified levels of attainment take the form of a seven-point scale as specified below, where A* represents the highest level of attainment –

A*

A

B

C

D

E

N

A Learner who does not meet the criteria to be awarded a specified level of attainment on the seven-point scale must be issued with a result of 'unclassified'.

Setting specified levels of attainment for V Levels

The key grade boundaries for V Levels are –

(a) A/B (b) E/N

An awarding organisation must set these key grade boundaries for each unit. In doing so, the awarding organisation must have regard to achieving suitable qualification level outcomes.

An awarding organisation must set the B/C, C/D and D/E unit grade boundaries arithmetically as follows –

(a) The grade B/C, C/D and D/E boundary marks are calculated by dividing the mark interval between the A/B and E/N boundaries by four.

(b) Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the A to B mark interval.

(c) Where there is a remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the A to B and B to C mark intervals.

(d) Where there is a remainder of three, one extra mark is added to each of the A to B, B to C and C to D mark intervals.

An awarding organisation must set the A*/A and the N/U boundary for each unit using appropriate statistical and technical evidence.

An awarding organisation must –

(a) calculate aggregate marks on the basis of a standardised or uniform mark scale (UMS),

(b) report the result for each unit in uniform marks, and

(c) add together a Learner's uniform marks for individual assessment units to generate that Learner's final mark for the qualification as a whole.

An awarding organisation must set the grade boundaries for the qualification at fixed uniform marks. Learners achieving overall uniform mark totals at or above those specified uniform boundary marks available for the qualification must be awarded the corresponding grade.

Where a candidate has taken more than the required number of units, the awarding organisation will generate the best grade for the candidate. This requirement is subject to the requirement under Condition VL7 that the Assessment by Examination

taken in a Learner's final assessment series prior to certification must be used in calculating their overall qualification grade.

No awarding in the first year of delivery

An awarding organisation must not award a V Level in a particular subject in the first academic year in which it makes that subject is available.

Assessment guidance

Condition VL6.1 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to the assessment of V Levels.

We set out our guidance for the purposes of Condition VL6.1 below.

Assessment guidance

This guidance aims to support an awarding organisation in determining the most appropriate methods of assessment for a V Level, and the most appropriate approach to marking of the Non-exam Assessment.

In determining which aspects of a V Level should be assessed by which assessment method, an awarding organisation should consider which method of assessment would be most appropriate, given –

- (a) the V Level qualification purposes,
- (b) the knowledge, understanding and skills that Learners are required to demonstrate,
- (c) the need for the assessment to reliably differentiate between Learners' levels of attainment and accurate classification across the grading scale, and
- (d) the assessment requirements

Differences between Assessment by Examination and Non-exam Assessment

Assessment by Examination is defined in Condition VL1.4. The definition does not require written examinations – other methods of assessment may also fall within this definition. For example, if all Learners complete a digital task or practical task set by an awarding organisation, take this simultaneously at a time determined by the awarding organisation, and under supervised conditions specified by the awarding organisation, this will be Assessment by Examination.

Assessment by Examination can provide the opportunity to directly test Learners' knowledge and understanding of the subject area they are studying to secure that the foundations of essential knowledge for vocational ability are in place. It can also assess learning across the full range of the subject content and, in so doing, provide an opportunity to compare Learner performance in Assessment by Examination and Non-exam Assessment. It can also assess the ability of Learners to apply their knowledge and understanding, either by mirroring work-place activities or by situating the tasks in authentic vocational scenarios, using case studies or pre-release materials.

Assessment by Examination can also be used to assess practical skills. Awarding organisations should consider how to make sure that such assessments are manageable for centres and can be delivered securely. For example, if Learners need to use specialist equipment to undertake a practical task at the same time, a school or college would need to have enough equipment for every Learner.

The definition of Non-exam Assessment covers any assessment which does not meet the definition of Assessment by Examination. A wide range of specific assessment tasks, set by the awarding organisation may fall within the definition of Non-exam Assessment, with task types including extended tasks involving multiple stages or steps and taken over period of time and practical, performance or skills-based tasks.

A written or on-screen assessment that all Learners in a Centre take at the same time, under controlled conditions, but where the date and time is determined by each Centre and so may therefore differ between Centres, would be Non-exam Assessment. Alternatively, Non-exam Assessment may include one or more extended task(s) over multiple sessions.

The final product of Non-exam Assessment may be a single document (for example, a write-up of an activity), which may be accompanied by indirect evidence (for example, relating to a professional discussion) of a practical activity. Alternatively, there may be a range and combination of product formats, including written text,

artefacts, live performances and recordings. In determining and specifying the product of Non-exam Assessment to be generated by the Learner, an awarding organisation should consider –

- (a) the Validity of the assessment, in terms of measuring appropriately the relevant knowledge, understanding and skills,
- (b) the Manageability of the assessment,
- (c) any threats to the Reliability and integrity of the assessment, and
- (d) the need for the assessment to reliably differentiate between levels of attainment across the grading scale.

Assessment by Examination is distinct from Non-exam Assessment because the former is designed to be taken simultaneously by all relevant Learners at a date and time determined by the awarding organisation whereas the latter is not. Assessment by Examination must be marked by the awarding organisation. This means that Assessment by Examination is appropriate for the assessment of particular knowledge, understanding or skills for which an awarding organisation identifies that it is important for all relevant Learners to be assessed simultaneously. For example, this may be the case if the nature of the content being assessed or how it is being assessed mean it is important that Learners are not aware of the specific assessment tasks in advance of the assessment to maintain the Reliability of the assessment.

Ensuring authenticity

It is important that the results of assessments accurately reflect Learners' levels of attainment. Non-exam Assessment can pose risks to this because Learners not taking the assessment at the same time and/or doing so over an extended period means there is the potential for malpractice. For example, this could give Learners greater opportunity to access inappropriate assistance, such as by using Artificial Intelligence (AI). In determining its approach to Non-exam Assessment (i.e. setting the questions or task(s) for Learners to attempt, setting the conditions under which these should be attempted by Learners, and determining how Learners' responses will be marked), an awarding organisation should consider –

- (a) any risks of malpractice that may arise,
- (b) the extent to which these risks are likely to crystallise, given the knowledge, understanding and skills that are to be assessed – for example, tasks designed to assess knowledge and understanding may be more at risk of malpractice using AI,

(c) the extent to which these risks may undermine the ability of the assessment to accurately reflect Learners' attainment, and

(d) the controls that may be required to address these risks.

Synoptic assessment

The assessment requirements state that both the Assessments by Examination and Non-exam Assessments must each include questions or tasks which allow Learners to demonstrate the ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, understanding and/or skills from across the full course of study. The assessment requirements also state that Learners must have the opportunity to produce developed responses which allow them to construct a sustained line of reasoning – or an equivalent logical sequence, depending on the nature of the task – which is coherent, relevant and effectively structured. This will involve connecting and integrating ideas, concepts and techniques from multiple areas, to mirror real-world practice in the relevant vocational area. This is to support the development of higher-level thinking, the Validity of qualification outcomes, and Learners' onward progression.

The assessment requirements also state that both the Assessments by Exam and Non-exam Assessments must include questions or tasks which allow Learners to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in response to authentic, vocationally-related contexts and scenarios. This is so that Learners encounter assessments which are aligned to real-world practice, professional attitudes and behaviours.

Adaptation of assessments

The assessment requirements permit a Centre to adapt questions or tasks in Non-exam Assessments for the purpose of tailoring the assessment to take account of individual Learner interests, local contexts and Manageability for Centres. This might, for example, be based on the geographical location of a Centre, or the resources it has available. In doing so, a Centre must not change the knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, or the Level of Demand of the assessment, and must not limit a Learner's ability to achieve any of the specified levels of attainment. The awarding organisation should consider the measures it will put in place to support a Centre in making acceptable and appropriate adaptations and the monitoring it will undertake to ensure that the awarding organisation has visibility of any adaptations and their appropriateness.

Marking

Condition H1.1 states as follows –

“For each qualification which it makes available, an awarding organisation must have in place effective arrangements to ensure that, as far as possible, the criteria against which Learners’ performance will be differentiated are –

(a) understood by Assessors and accurately applied, and

(b) applied consistently by Assessors, regardless of the identity of the Assessor, Learner or Centre.”

The assessment requirements allow the Non-exam Assessments for a V Level to be marked by –

- the awarding organisation or a person connected to the awarding organisation,
- a Centre, or
- a combination of the two.

Whichever approach an awarding organisation takes, it must still achieve compliance with General Condition H1.1.

When determining the approach to marking Non-exam Assessment, an awarding organisation should consider –

(a) the Validity of the assessment, in terms of measuring appropriately the relevant knowledge, understanding and skills,

(b) the Manageability of the assessment,

(c) any threats to the Reliability and integrity of the assessment, and

(d) the need for the assessment to reliably differentiate between levels of attainment across the grading scale.

In doing so, an awarding organisation should consider the following factors –

(a) the nature of the knowledge, understanding and skills being assessed and who may be best placed to assess them,

(b) the nature of the assessment evidence, including whether the evidence generated by Learners is likely to arise naturally (i.e. not be planned) and/or be ephemeral in nature, and

(c) the need for marking standards to be consistently applied across centres over the lifetime of the qualification.

Standard setting guidance

Condition VL7.2(b) allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to the setting of specified levels of attainment for V Levels.

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition VL7.2(b).

Evidence to be taken into account in setting specified levels of attainment

Condition VL7.3 states that in setting the specified levels of attainment for a V Level which it makes available, an awarding organisation must have regard to an appropriate range of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Condition VL7.4 states that such evidence will only be appropriate if it includes evidence of –

- (a) the Level of Demand of the assessments for that qualification,
- (b) the level of attainment demonstrated in those assessments by an appropriately representative sample of Learners taking that qualification,
- (c) where appropriate, the level of attainment demonstrated by Learners taking that qualification in –
 - i. a prior assessment (which was not for that qualification), whether or not that assessment was for a regulated qualification, or
 - ii. a prior qualification, whether or not that qualification was a regulated qualification, and
 - iii. following the first year in which qualification was awarded, the level of attainment demonstrated by Learners who have previously been awarded the qualification.

Without prejudice to any requirements that Ofqual may set in relation to the weight to be given to evidence in the first awards, examples of the evidence that may be used by an awarding organisation in setting the specified levels of attainment for a V Level which it makes available may include –

- any description of performance or exemplification materials for key grades,
- question papers or tasks and final mark schemes,
- senior Assessor input into decisions – for example, comments on how the assessments have worked or are likely to work, and recommendations for the setting of specified levels of attainment,
- technical information about how the assessments and/or any similar assessments previously available have functioned – for example, mark distributions, mean marks, standard deviations, item-level statistics,
- samples of current Learners' work selected from a range of Centres and assessed or Moderated by Assessors or moderators whose work is known to be reliable,
- details of changes in entry patterns and choices of options,
- archive Learners' work exemplifying specified levels of attainment in previous assessment series for the qualification, together with the relevant question papers or tasks and mark schemes,
- inter-awarding organisation evidence for V Levels,
- pertinent material deemed to be of equivalent standard from similar qualifications or other relevant qualifications,
- information on Learners' performance in previous assessment series for the qualification, and
- marking guides for assessments where the evidence is of an ephemeral nature

In determining whether it has sufficient evidence of the level of attainment demonstrated in the assessments for a V Level by an appropriate percentage of the Learners taking that qualification, an awarding organisation should consider whether the marks on its system reflect –

- all possible routes through the qualification, and
- a representative proportion of Learners' marks for the qualification and Component.

Subject level Conditions, requirements and guidance for V Level accounting and

finance

Condition VL(Accounting and Finance)1: Compliance with content requirements

VL(Accounting and Finance)1.1

In respect of each V Level qualification in accounting and finance which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –

- a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled [x],
- b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and
- c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

VL(Accounting and Finance)1.2

In respect of each V Level qualification in accounting and finance which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition VL(Accounting and Finance)2: Assessment

VL(Accounting and Finance)2.1

In respect of the total marks available for a V Level qualification in accounting and finance which it makes available, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

- a) 40% of those marks are made available through Assessments by Examination, and
- b) 60% of those marks are made available through Non-exam Assessments.

VL(Accounting and Finance)2.2

An awarding organisation must ensure that a Learner takes all of the Assessments by Examination for a V Level qualification in accounting and finance which it makes available in the assessment series in which the Learner requests certification for the qualification.

VL(Accounting and Finance)2.3

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a V Level qualification in accounting and finance which it makes available, or proposes to make available, it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Assessment objectives – V Level qualifications in accounting and finance

Condition VL(Accounting and Finance)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for all V Level qualifications in accounting and finance.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition VL(Accounting and Finance)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all V Level qualifications in accounting and finance they make available, or propose to make available.

AO1 – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts, principles, requirements and contextual factors relevant to the subject area	30-35%
AO2 – Apply knowledge and understanding to plan, carry out tasks, produce outputs, and use information appropriately	35-40%
AO3 – Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations	25-30%

Guidance in relation to assessments for V Level qualifications in accounting and finance

Condition VL(Accounting and Finance)2.2 allows us to specify guidance in relation to

assessments for V Level qualifications in accounting and finance.

We set out our guidance for the purposes of Condition VL(Accounting and Finance)2.2 below.

The guidance set out below explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret the assessment objectives in terms of:

- the 'elements' within each assessment objective, that is the discrete aspects that questions/tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of the elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives
- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used – defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions

AO1 – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles, requirements and contextual factors relevant to the subject area (30-35%)

Elements	Coverage of elements	Interpretations and definitions
1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles	Full coverage in each set of assessments ^{footnote 2} (but not in every assessment).	Knowledge refers to facts, concepts, principles, requirements and other information from the specification. This includes, for example, identifying or stating information, definitions, features and rules.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of requirements	A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective. No more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification	Understanding refers to showing awareness of the meaning, purpose or implications of knowledge, such as by explaining, describing relationships and giving reasons. This includes why something is used, how it works, and what follows from given information. Concepts and principles, requirements

<p>3. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contextual factors</p>	<p>should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation. [footnote 3]</p> <p>A reasonable balance between marks for knowledge and marks for understanding.</p>	<p>and contextual factors are aspects of subject content. An awarding organisation should explain its approach to targeting them in its assessment strategy.</p> <p>Concepts refers to the foundational ideas that underpin financial and accounting information.</p> <p>Principles refer to the rules and values guiding the preparation and responsible use of financial information.</p> <p>Requirements refer to the expectations that shape how financial information is generated, structured and presented within organisations.</p> <p>Contextual factors refer to the organisational characteristics and conditions that influence how financial information is interpreted.</p>
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AO2 – Apply knowledge and understanding to plan, carry out tasks, produce outputs, and use information appropriately (35-40%)

Elements	Coverage of elements	Interpretations and definitions
<p>1. Apply knowledge and understanding to plan</p>	<p>Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).</p>	<p>Plan refers to identifying the purpose and requirements of an applied task and determining the steps, information and tools needed before acting.</p>
<p>2. Apply knowledge and understanding to carry out tasks</p>	<p>A reasonable balance between the elements within this</p>	<p>Carry out tasks refers to performing applied activities within structured organisational scenarios.</p> <p>Produce outputs refers to generating artefacts from applied activity and presenting outputs in a clear and appropriate format.</p>

assessment
objective.

3. Apply knowledge and understanding to produce outputs

Use information appropriately refers to selecting, handling and presenting accounting and financial information accurately and consistently, in line with task requirements and organisational context, including the correct use of calculations, formats and terminology.

4. Apply knowledge and understanding to use information appropriately

AO3 – Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations (25-30%)

Elements	Coverage of elements	Interpretations and definitions
1. Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make judgements	Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).	Make judgements refers to forming evidence-based views on organisational performance, position or options, based on analysis of structured financial information and relevant context.
2. Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to draw conclusions	A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.	Draw conclusions refers to synthesising structured financial information to conclude what the financial evidence shows about an organisation's performance, position or financial options.
3. Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make		Make recommendations refers to proposing justified actions or options informed by analysis and evaluation of structured financial information, taking account of organisational objectives, constraints, risks or assumptions.

Subject level Conditions, requirements and guidance for V Level digital systems and data

Condition VL(Digital Systems and Data)1: Compliance with content requirements

VL(Digital Systems and Data)1.1

In respect of each V Level qualification in digital systems and data which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –

- a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled [x],
- b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and
- c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

VL(Digital Systems and Data)1.2

In respect of each V Level qualification in digital systems and data which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition VL(Digital Systems and Data)2: Assessment

VL(Digital Systems and Data)2.1

In respect of the total marks available for a V Level qualification in digital systems and data which it makes available, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

a) 40% of those marks are made available through Assessments by Examination, and

b) 60% of those marks are made available through Non-exam Assessments.

VL(Digital Systems and Data)2.2

An awarding organisation must ensure that a Learner takes all of the Assessments by Examination for a V Level qualification in digital systems and data which it makes available in the assessment series in which the Learner requests certification for the qualification.

VL(Digital Systems and Data)2.3

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a V Level qualification in digital systems and data which it makes available, or proposes to make available, it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Assessment objectives – V Level qualifications in digital systems and data

Condition VL(Digital Systems and Data)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for all V Level qualifications in digital systems and data.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition VL(Digital Systems and Data)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all V Level qualifications in digital systems and data they make available, or propose to make available.

AO1 – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts, principles, requirements and contextual factors relevant to the subject area	30-35%
AO2 – Apply knowledge and understanding to plan, carry out tasks, produce outputs, and use information appropriately	35-40%
AO3 – Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make	25-

Guidance in relation to assessments for V Level qualifications in digital systems and data

Condition VL(Digital Systems and Data)2.2 allows us to specify guidance in relation to assessments for V Level qualifications in digital systems and data.

We set out our guidance for the purposes of Condition VL(Digital Systems and Data)2.2 below.

The guidance set out below explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret the assessment objectives in terms of:

- the ‘elements’ within each assessment objective, that is the discrete aspects that questions/tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of the elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives
- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used – defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions

AO1 – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles, requirements and contextual factors relevant to the subject area (30-35%)

Elements	Coverage of elements	Interpretations and definitions
1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts	Full coverage in each set of assessments ^{footnote 4]} (but not in every assessment).	Knowledge refers to facts, concepts, principles, requirements and other information from the specification. This includes, for example, identifying or stating information, definitions, features and rules.

and principles	A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of requirements	No more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation. [footnote 5]
3. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contextual factors	A reasonable balance between marks for knowledge and marks for understanding.

Understanding refers to showing awareness of the meaning, purpose or implications of knowledge, such as by explaining, describing relationships and giving reasons. This includes why something is used, how it works, and what follows from given information.

Concepts and principles, requirements and contextual factors are aspects of subject content. An awarding organisation should explain its approach to targeting them in its assessment strategy.

Concepts refers to the fundamental ideas that underpin what digital systems and processes are.

Principles refers to foundational rules that underpin safe, secure and effective digital practice.

Requirements refer to stated conditions that must be met.

Contextual factors refer to external factors that shape decisions or approaches, such as user needs or organisational settings.

AO2 – Apply knowledge and understanding to plan, carry out tasks, produce outputs, and use information appropriately (35-40%)

Elements	Coverage of elements	Interpretations and definitions
1. Apply knowledge and understanding to plan	Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).	Plan refers to identifying the purpose and requirements of an applied task and determining the steps, information and tools needed before acting.

2. Apply knowledge and understanding to carry out tasks

A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.

3. Apply knowledge and understanding to produce outputs

Carry out tasks refers to undertaking digital activities accurately and in a structured way.

Produce outputs refers to generating artefacts accurately and in the required form.

4. Apply knowledge and understanding to use information appropriately

Use information appropriately refers to selecting, handling and recording information accurately and responsibly.

AO3 – Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations (25-30%)

Elements

Coverage of elements

Interpretations and definitions

1. Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make judgements

Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).

Make judgements refers to forming evidence-based views from the information, situation or evidence reviewed.

2. Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to draw conclusions

A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.

Draw conclusions refers to synthesising information and evidence to conclude what actions are warranted based on the information, situation or evidence reviewed.

3. Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make

Make recommendations refers to proposing specific improvements or actions that logically follow from the information, evidence or situation reviewed.

Subject level Conditions, requirements and guidance for V Level education

Condition VL(Education)1: Compliance with content requirements

VL(Education)1.1

In respect of each V Level qualification in education which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –

- a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled [x],
- b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and
- c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

VL(Education)1.2

In respect of each V Level qualification in education which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition VL(Education)2: Assessment

VL(Education)2.1

In respect of the total marks available for a V Level qualification in education which it makes available, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

a) 40% of those marks are made available through Assessments by Examination, and

b) 60% of those marks are made available through Non-exam Assessments.

VL(Education)2.2

An awarding organisation must ensure that a Learner takes all of the Assessments by Examination for a V Level qualification in education which it makes available in the assessment series in which the Learner requests certification for the qualification.

VL(Education)2.3

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a V Level qualification in education which it makes available, or proposes to make available, it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Assessment objectives – V Level qualifications in education

Condition VL(Education)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for all V Level qualifications in education.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition VL(Education)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all V Level qualifications in education they make available, or propose to make available.

AO1 – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts, principles, requirements and contextual factors relevant to the subject area	30-35%
AO2 – Apply knowledge and understanding to plan, carry out tasks, produce outputs, and use information appropriately	35-40%
AO3 – Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations	25-30%

Guidance in relation to assessments for V Level qualifications in education

Condition VL(Education)2.2 allows us to specify guidance in relation to assessments for V Level qualifications in education.

We set out our guidance for the purposes of Condition VL(Education)2.2 below.

The guidance set out below explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret the assessment objectives in terms of:

- the ‘elements’ within each assessment objective, that is the discrete aspects that questions/tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of the elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives
- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used – defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions

AO1 – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles, requirements and contextual factors relevant to the subject area (30-35%)

Elements	Coverage of elements	Interpretations and definitions
1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles	Full coverage in each set of assessments ^{footnote 6]} (but not in every assessment).	Knowledge refers to facts, concepts, principles, requirements and other information from the specification. This includes, for example, identifying or stating information, definitions, features and rules.
2.	A reasonable balance between the elements within	Understanding refers to showing awareness of the meaning, purpose or implications of knowledge, such as by

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of requirements	this assessment objective.	explaining, describing relationships and giving reasons. This includes why something is used, how it works, and what follows from given information.
3. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contextual factors	No more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation. [footnote 7] A reasonable balance between marks for knowledge and marks for understanding.	<p>Concepts and principles, requirements and contextual factors are aspects of subject content. An awarding organisation should explain its approach to targeting them in its assessment strategy.</p> <p>Concepts refer to the foundations of educational practice, including pedagogical approaches and the theories that underpin them.</p> <p>Principles refer to the core rules and values guiding how effective education practice is planned, organised and carried out.</p> <p>Requirements include all expectations educators must meet when planning and delivering learning sessions and when working with others.</p> <p>Contextual factors refer to the features of the learning situation that shape decisions.</p>

AO2 – Apply knowledge and understanding to plan, carry out tasks, produce outputs, and use information appropriately (35-40%)

Elements	Coverage of elements	Interpretations and definitions
1. Apply knowledge and understanding to plan	Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).	Plan refers to identifying the purpose and requirements of an applied task and determining the steps, information and resources needed before acting.

2. Apply knowledge and understanding to carry out tasks

A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.

Carry out tasks refers to performing applied activities such as planning learning sessions, using appropriate methods, techniques and approaches.

3. Apply knowledge and understanding to produce outputs

Produce outputs refers to generating artefacts that arise from applied education tasks.

4. Apply knowledge and understanding to use information appropriately

Use information appropriately refers to handling information in ways that are suitable for the task and context, including consideration of accuracy, relevance and any applicable requirements.

AO3 – Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make judgements, draw conclusions and make recommendations (25-30%)

Elements

Coverage of elements

Interpretations and definitions

1. Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to make judgements

Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).

Make judgements refers to evaluating information and evidence to determine what they show in relation to education practice. Judgements must be supported by evidence rather than opinion.

2. Analyse and evaluate information, situations and evidence to draw conclusions

A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective.

Draw conclusions refers to synthesising information and evidence to conclude what actions or interpretations are warranted based on the information, situation or evidence reviewed.

3. Analyse and evaluate

Make recommendations refers to proposing specific, justified actions that logically follow from the information, evidence or situation reviewed.

**information,
situations and
evidence to make
recommendations**

Question 61

Do you have any comments on the drafting of the proposed Conditions, requirements or guidance for V Levels?

1. For ease of reference, the specified levels of attainment used in V levels are referred to in these requirements as 'grades' with the setting of those specified levels of attainment referred to as 'grading'. ↩
2. For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a V Level qualification in accounting and finance. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification. ↩
3. Marks which 'reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation' means any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge that is part of the specification. It does not include marks awarded for selecting appropriate knowledge (for example, to evidence an argument), or for applying knowledge to a particular context. ↩
4. For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a V Level qualification in digital systems and data. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification. ↩
5. Marks which 'reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation' means any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge that is part of the specification. It does not include marks awarded for selecting appropriate knowledge (for example, to evidence an argument), or for applying knowledge to a particular context. ↩
6. For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a V Level qualification in education. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification. ↩
7. Marks which 'reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation' means any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge that is part of the

specification. It does not include marks awarded for selecting appropriate knowledge (for example, to evidence an argument), or for applying knowledge to a particular context. [←](#)

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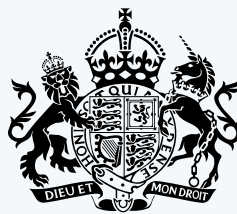
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