NCFE Service Message archive 2023/24

Contents

September 2023 – service message

Important information

Added 29/09/2023 - Introduction of 'learner start date' in the NCFE Portal: We've introduced a new mandatory field in the learner registration process on the NCFE Portal. This will ensure that we can fully support you and your learners at every step of their journeys.

External assessment timetable for 2023-25: We're pleased to share with all centres our updated external assessment timetable for all our CACHE and V Certs qualifications for 2023-24 and 2024-25.

A reminder of fees and pricing for 2023-24: We'd like to remind you about our fees and pricing approach for 2023-24. As an educational charity, we aim to keep our prices as low as possible for customers and last year we were able to support the sector with a below-inflationary rise in fees. However, due to the recent financial landscape, we'll be increasing our fees up to 8%, in line with the consumer price inflation rate for April 2023.

Assessments and reviews:

Annual Monitoring Reviews (AMR): Following your feedback, we've made improvements to our AMR process.

External Quality Assurance (EQA) reviews: Remember to register your learners and book your EQA reviews as early as possible to ensure that we can arrange suitable dates that are convenient to both you and your EQA.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment 2023-24 update: Later this month we'll be publishing the revised Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessments. Updates to Surpass platform: We've moved all of our online assessments within Surpass from Flash to HTML, due to the withdrawal of Adobe Flash Player.

Qualification updates:

Changes to Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening and Communicating (SLC) assessments: We've updated SLC assessments so that they're all internally set assessments. You're now able to devise and manage your own topics, in line with our new guidance for assessor documents, without submitting a contextualisation request.

Horizons qualification updates document: View our recent qualification updates and maintenance information, such as qualification withdrawals, new qualifications and qualification amendments.

Resources and support:

Functional Skills events: See our upcoming events to support you in your delivery, including our webinar on approaching the assessments Level 1 and Level 2 English and adapting maths strategies by Delivery Mode.

International learners: To support our external quality assurance process and provide better visibility of international learners and their country of origin at the time of delivery, we've added a new field to the Portal to allow you to specify where your learners live at the point of registration.

Useful V cert updates to support your delivery: As you start the new academic year, we wanted to update you on a few things which will support you in your delivery of V Certs, which includes the publication of the non-exam assessment (NEA) brief to help you plan your assessment timetable, updates to tutor guides to help with planning and preparation and subject-specific updates to qualification specifications and content.

Share your views:

VTQ 2023 Results Action Plan post-results survey: Ofqual is seeking your views on the measures put in place as part of the VTQ Results Action Plan. Your feedback will help Ofqual to consider improvements for 2024.

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October 2023 – service message

Important information

Introduction of 'learner start date' in the NCFE Portal: We've introduced a new mandatory field in the learner registration process on the NCFE Portal. This will ensure that we can fully support you and your learners at every step of their journeys. This field went live on the Portal on Monday 2 October, and here you'll need to enter the date that each learner commenced the qualification.

Assessments and reviews:

Functional Skills new assessment paper introductions: To help you plan your assessments, we want to share the dates we intend to introduce new assessment papers.

Functional Skills paper-based bookings over the festive period: With the festive period fast approaching, we're sharing the last date of when learners can sit paper-based bookings before the Christmas break and the first date learners can sit in the new year.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment 2023-24: Please see our updated Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment and accompanying Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery documents for 2023-24.

Qualification updates:

Horizons qualification updates document: View our recent qualification updates and maintenance information, such as qualification withdrawals, new qualifications and qualification amendments.

Our Digital Functional Skills qualifications are now live: Find out everything you need to know and what support is available.

Resources and support:

Functional Skills events: See our upcoming events to support your delivery, including our webinar on the changes to the speaking, listening and communicating component of English Functional Skills and our session for Functional Skills maths teachers on exploring a range of methods to teach no calculator skills.

New members needed to join the Foundation for Education Development (the FED) Practitioners Council: The FED is currently recruiting members to their Practitioners' Council. The role of this council is to learn from those who work directly with children and young people whether in a formalised school or college setting or in more informal or alternate education provisions or services.

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) and affected centres: There have recently been concerns raised regarding reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) used in the construction of many school buildings built between the 1950s and 1990s. We've identified a small number of centres who we believe to have been required to put in place mitigations, and we'll work with you directly to ensure that the impact on learners is minimised.

Useful V cert updates to support your delivery: See our range of support for the delivery of V Certs, which includes updated teaching materials, Prepare to Assess events, exemplar non-exam assessment (NEA) responses and more.

What do the post-16 reforms mean for adult learners? Our Learning for Work Product Manager, Emzi Mills-Frater, explains what the post-16 reforms will look like for adult learners and when these changes will come about.

View this month's update which includes important reminders, key upcoming dates for your diary and resources to help you.

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November 2023 – service message

Assessments and reviews:

Post-16 reforms update: keeping you informed every step of the way: Throughout the post-16 qualification reforms, our aim is to ensure that you have expert guidance and up-to-date information to support you along the way. Take a look at our dedicated landing page to download our essential guide to the reforms, watch our FAQ videos and more.

Quality Assurance Policy for 2023-24: We've now published our latest Quality Assurance Policy, which covers what we'll do to support you through the external quality assurance process, how to prepare for reviews, as well as what we need from you.

Functional Skills paper-based bookings over the festive period: With the festive period fast approaching, we're sharing the last date of when learners can sit paper-based bookings before the Christmas break and the first date learners can sit in the new year.

Amendments to coloured paper options: As part of our ongoing monitoring and evaluation process, in relation to the presentation of external assessment papers in various coloured options for accessibility, we've taken the decision to amend the range and number of options available from 1 December 2023.

Qualification updates:

Important V Cert updates to support your delivery: Read our updates regarding the completion of teaching and learning for the Model 5 V Certs, the withdrawal of Model 4 V Certs and the actions you need to take.

Horizons qualification updates document: View our recent qualification updates and maintenance information, such as qualification withdrawals, new qualifications and qualification amendments.

Resources and support:

Assessor and Internal Quality Assurers events: We're now offering centres half-day remote training sessions for Internal Quality Assurers and Assessors.

Functional Skills events: See our upcoming events to support your delivery, including our CPD session on 'relatable maths' which explores strategies to relate maths to real, everyday life. There will also be a session on 'questioning techniques' to use in your teaching.

Monthly exams officer update: View this month's update which includes important reminders specifically for exams officers, key upcoming dates for your diary and resources to help you.

Professional Development Week: From 18-21 December, our Provider Development team is hosting a Professional Development Week, aiming to deliver a variety of live and recorded remote sessions to our centres that will support and enhance teaching and learning practice whilst also providing insight into our processes.

V Cert examiner opportunities: We're currently recruiting for flexible examiner roles to join our team across a number of V Cert subject areas. Find out more on our careers webpage and contact the Assessment Delivery team with any queries you may have.

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December 2023 – service message

Important updates

Delivery of VTQ results for 2024 and beyond

To ensure the timely delivery of VTQ results for learners in 2024 and beyond, we've contacted your centre if you deliver one or more of the qualifications in scope of the government's measures for the timely delivery of VTQ results. If this applies to you, please ensure that you visit our results webpage for more information and share this with your colleagues, including exams officers, curriculum teams and senior leaders.

Suspected malpractice policies and procedures – prohibited use of AI

We wanted to signpost you to all our policies and procedures around malpractice so that you can be reminded about the regulations around the use of tools, particularly ones that use Artificial Intelligence (AI), that could provide students with an unfair advantage, resulting in investigation, sanctions and the possible disqualification of students from external assessments.

Christmas opening hours
We're closing for the Christmas break from 4:30pm on Friday 22 December 2023

until 8:30am on Tuesday 2 January 2023. This means our customer support services (by email, phone and LiveChat) will be unavailable during this time, but you'll still be able to access our website and the Portal, as usual.

Professional Development Week: From 18-21 December, our Provider Development team is hosting a Professional Development Week, where you can access a variety of live and recorded remote sessions to support and enhance your teaching and learning practice.

Assessments and reviews:

Removal of CYPOP5 Y/600/9770 (Paper based only) : As of 1 December, there we'll no longer be a paper-based option for booking any CYPOP5 assessments. The CYPOP5 assessment will only be available to be taken online via our online assessment system Surpass.

Qualification updates:

Horizons qualification updates document: View our recent qualification updates and maintenance information, such as qualification withdrawals, new qualifications and qualification amendments.

Updates on Digital Functional Skills: We want to share some key upcoming dates, covering registrations, bookings, assessments and results release.

Qualification specifications translated into Welsh: We're now offering a comprehensive range of qualifications which are now available translated into Welsh and regulated by Qualification Wales.

Model 4 Technical Awards: View our important updates for Model 4 Technical Awards including Synoptic Project briefs, actions you need to take for registered learners, and more.

Resources and support:

Brand new online Functional Skills IQA and assessor training events: In February 2024, we'll be delivering brand new online training events specifically for Functional Skills Assessors and IQAs which you can sign up to now.

Sign your learners up for our Education and Early Years student conference: Taking place on 21 February 2-4pm, our next student conference focuses on 'the unique child'. Your students will learn vital skills and knowledge to support them on placements or in the workplace, centring around the critical importance of recognising, valuing and respecting the holistic needs of each child.

Functional Skills events: See our upcoming events to support your delivery, including our teach, share, transform virtual meet-ups and monthly drop-in clinics. We're also hosting a CPD session on 'relatable maths' which explores strategies to relate maths to real, everyday life, and a session on 'questioning techniques' to use in your teaching.

Monthly exams officer update: View this month's update which includes important reminders specifically for exams officers, key upcoming dates for your diary, and resources to help you.

Level 1 and 2 English Functional Skills practice paper guidance: Guidance documents are now available for Level 1 and Level 2 English Functional Skills and will support centres in preparing learners for assessments. These documents include practice questions and marked sample answers (with rationale) and can be found on the qualification pages on our website.

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January 2024 – service message

Important updates

First term-time checkpoint open to ensure the timely delivery of VTQ results

To ensure the timely delivery of vocational technical qualifications (VTQ) results for learners in 2024 and beyond, we recently shared our plan and timelines with you for these arrangements, which you can find on our VTQ timely results webpage. If your centre runs one or more of the qualifications in scope of this year's arrangements, you must complete the actions required for the first term-time checkpoint, which is open now, and **will close on 9 February 2024.** Find out how to complete the required actions.

Resilience arrangements

Ofqual has published guidance on measures to ensure resilience in the qualification system which focuses on gathering and retaining evidence on learner performance for potential grading decisions in the event of government decisions to cancel exams or other formal assessment.

Whilst the guidance primarily targets GCSE and A level qualifications, this also includes T Levels, and other NCFE qualifications are also in scope. For further details including guidance and information on the NCFE qualifications in scope, visit this page.

We also want to remind you about contingency planning and preparing for unexpected events. You must have a contingency plan in place, which can be deployed if required, and be written in consideration with DfE, JCQ, and NCFE contingency planning documents. Find more information on contingency planning.

Guidance issued by the National Cyber Security Centre

We want to support you in maintaining the highest standards of cyber security to safeguard your sensitive information, including student personal data, and to protect the integrity of secure assessments. In today's digital landscape, it's crucial to adhere to industry best practices to mitigate the risk of cyber threats. We want to share with you some key guidelines that align with industry standards and will help protect your digital assets.

You can find top tips and guidance here Top tips for staying secure online - NCSC.GOV.UK which covers various topics including the use of strong passwords, backing up your data and using 2-step verification.

Assessments and reviews:

Suspected malpractice policies and procedures – prohibited use of AI: We wanted to highlight our policies and procedures around malpractice to remind you about the regulations surrounding the use of tools – particularly ones that use artificial intelligence (AI) – that could provide students with an unfair advantage, resulting in investigation, sanctions and the possible disqualification of students from external assessments. Please ensure that all spelling and grammar-checking applications and/or extensions, and any AI applications or tools, have been disabled before learners sit assessments.

Digital Functional Skills external assessments now live on Surpass: Our Digital Functional Skills external assessments are now live within our online assessment platform, Surpass.

Functional Skills alignment to the JCQ instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Maths): We've aligned our Functional Skills external assessment regulations to the JCQ instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Maths).

Updates to Functional Skills assessment tracking document (ATD): The ATD has been updated with a new column in the SLC tab to document if an assessment has been recorded or not. You should use the new tracker (V1.3) going forward, which can be found on the relevant qualification pages under assessment materials. If you use your

own version of this document, please ensure to add this additional column for SLC assessments.

Portal bookings for Speaking, Listening and Communicating (SLC) assessments: Since September 2023, SLC tasks have been devised and managed by centres, in line with information contained in the SLC assessments are therefore no longer available for booking in the Portal, but should still be recorded on the assessment tracking document (ATD) under the SLC tab.

Qualification updates:

Horizons qualification updates document: View our most recent qualification updates and maintenance information, such as qualification withdrawals, new qualifications and qualification amendments. No updates were published in January, so please refer to our December document.

Resources and support:

Updates to our complaints policy: If you're not satisfied with any aspect of our products or services, we want to put it right for you as soon as possible. To ensure we can support you in the best way, we've updated our complaints policy and you can find more details on our website.

Change of contact details: If any contact details at your centre have changed, such as programme contact, head of centre, finance, or exams contacts, it is important that you let us know. Please complete our change of centre contact details form.

Important V Cert updates to support your delivery: Read our updates regarding the completion of teaching and learning for the Model 5 V Certs, the withdrawal of Model 4 V Certs, and the actions you need to take.

Monthly exams officer update: View this month's update which includes important reminders specifically for exams officers, upcoming events and resources to help you.

Post-16 reforms update: keeping you informed every step of the way: Throughout the post-16 qualification reforms, our aim is to ensure that you have expert guidance and up-to-date information to support you along the way. Take a look at our dedicated landing page to download our essential guide to the reforms, watch our FAQ videos and more.

Upcoming Functional Skills events: See our upcoming events to support your delivery, including our onboarding webinars, drop-in clinics and Teach, Share, Transform events. We're also hosting a 'Power of Phonics and Magic of Morphemes' interactive session which explores both phonics and morphemes and how these can be used to develop

reading and spelling skills, on 25 January 3:30-5pm. In February, we'll be delivering training events for Assessors and IQAs.

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February 2024 – service message

Important updates

First term-time checkpoint now closed
To ensure the timely delivery of vocational technical qualifications (VTQ) results for learners in 2024 and beyond, we have two term-time checkpoints this academic year that you must complete. The first checkpoint is now closed, and we want to thank you for submitting your information to us. If you haven't yet completed your check, our team will have been in contact with you about next steps. The next checkpoint will open on 15 April and the deadline for completion will be 3 May. Find out more.
You can also access Ofqual's VTQ information hub for further support.

Reminder on resilience arrangements and contingency planning
Please ensure you familiarise yourself with Ofqual's guidance on resilience arrangements and our information on contingency planning.

Assessments and reviews:

V Certs non-examined assessments – submission of learner marks and uploading evidence: We're fast approaching another significant period in delivering our non-examined assessment (NEA). Most of you will be working your way through the marking of the NEAs soon and you'll need to turn your attention to submitting marks and uploading evidence on the Portal. Find out more about how to do this and the key things to remember.

Skills for Care's additional assessment principles guidance for adult social care qualifications: Skills for Care and the Joint Awarding Body Quality Group (awarding organisations that develop and offer adult social care qualifications), have produced a guidance document to support best practice in maintaining standardised approaches and to uphold the rigour and integrity of qualifications in the sector.

Qualification updates:

Horizons qualification updates document: View our recent qualification updates and maintenance information, such as qualification withdrawals, new qualifications and qualification amendments. This month we're updating you on the withdrawal of the Level 5 Diploma for Assistant Practitioners in Healthcare.

Resources and support:
Maths and English CPD and intensive onboarding: Find out more about our upcoming CPD and training events.

Monthly exams officer update: View this month's update which includes important reminders specifically for exams officers, upcoming events and resources to help you.

Approvals:

Approval window for T Levels opening on 26 February: The approval window for T Levels opens on 26 February 2024 and closes on 28 June 2024. If you already deliver any of our T Level qualifications and are planning to deliver additional NCFE T Level qualifications in September 2024, you'll need to apply for additional product approval with us via our website before you can start the delivery of them.

If you don't deliver T Levels but plan to from September 2024, please follow the steps on this page to apply for approval. Please be aware that if your college has multiple campuses, you'll need to apply for approval for each campus to deliver these additional qualifications. Similarly, if your academy is part of a Multi Academy Trust, each academy will require separate approval.

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March 2024 – service message

Important updates

VTQ term-time checks reminder: The first VTQ term-time checkpoint is now closed, and we want to thank you for submitting your information to us. If you haven't yet completed your check, our team will have been in contact with you. The window for the second term-time checkpoint will open on 15 April 2024 and the deadline will be 3 May 2024. You can also access Ofqual's VTQ information hub for further support.

Aspiration Awards: Nominations for our Aspiration Awards are closing this Friday (22 March), and we want to hear from you! Thank you to everyone who's already submitted a nomination – we've loved reading your inspiring stories. If you haven't had the chance to submit a nomination yet, there's still time, find out more about how to enter, browse the categories and submit your nominations.

Assessments and reviews

Model 5 (NEW) V Cert assessment support: As we approach the final stages of the assessment window for our Level 1/2 Technical Award qualifications, we want to remind you of some key dates and guidance. It's important to meet all deadlines outlined to ensure your learners receive accurate and timely results. Visit our new V Cert assessment support webpage for more information on deadlines, how to access assessment materials, moderation and uploading of learner evidence, the benefits of online assessment and sources of support.

You can also sign up for our new **V Cert Assessor and Internal Quality Assurer Training,** a training opportunity for practitioners involved in the delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance of our V Cert technical awards. This training will provide the chance to expand your knowledge and understanding of the Model 5 qualifications. Find out more and sign up here.

Model 4 V Certs internal assessments: We wanted to share information about booking your learners onto the Model 4 V Certs non-examined assessment, withdrawing learners and upcoming submission dates. Please note that Model 4 V Certs require an external quality assurance review (Model 5 V Certs don't require EQA reviews). To book this, please contact your External Quality Assurer as soon as possible. As a reminder, EQA reviews must be completed by 31 July 2024 to ensure timely results.

Qualification updates

Horizons qualification updates document: View our recent qualification updates and maintenance information, such as qualification withdrawals, new qualifications and qualification amendments.

Graded qualifications and External Quality Assurer (EQA) reviews: We wanted to remind you that EQAs must receive grades for at least one completed unit ahead of your EQA review, to select learners for sampling and make a judgement on whether the grading criteria has been applied in line with the qualification specification. These grades must be submitted via the Portal prior to your EQA review.

Following the review, the unit grades will either be accepted and banked by your EQA or, if they disagree with the grades, they'll be rejected. If a grade is rejected, you must reassess, re-grade, internally quality assure and resubmit the new unit grade in line with EQA actions.

V Certs approved for 2026 performance tables: 11 of our V Certs will continue to be approved by the Department for Education (DfE) and count towards Key Stage 4

performance tables for 2026. This is great news for year 10 learners considering their options from September 2024.

Resources and support

Functional Skills – a guide to compliance: Register for our upcoming webinar on 15 April, designed for all staff involved in maths and English Functional Skills assessments, where we'll discuss regulations and how to ensure compliance.

Functional Skills onboarding: Catch up on our latest monthly onboarding webinar for information on our Functional Skills qualifications for new centres and staff. You can also find out more about all upcoming Functional Skills maths and English training events.

Have your say – V Cert in Business and Enterprise: To continue to improve our support package, we need your feedback on our tutor guidance for the NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Business and Enterprise (603/7004/X). Have your say in our short survey before 12 April.

Sign up your learners for our first Health student conference: Taking place on 25 June from 10am-12pm, this student conference will focus on '**Digital Healthcare Revolution: Transforming Healthcare with Technology'**. Your students will delve into the dynamic realm of technology in healthcare and explore how healthcare professionals are using technology to enhance patient outcomes.

Education and Early Years teaching assistant forum events: Our free TA forum events offer interactive CPD opportunities, to help teaching assistants to build on their existing knowledge and skills in supporting children and young people within teaching and learning environments. Sign up for the next event in May, which will focus on supporting literacy skills.

Monthly exams officer update: View this month's update which includes important reminders specifically for exams officers, upcoming events and resources to help you.

Reforms

Reminder: we're here to support you through the post-16 reforms: As other awarding organisations look to stop provision after the post-16 reforms, we're supporting you with a positive future. We're working with industry specialists to develop a suite of new qualifications and ensure no learner is left behind.

If you have concerns about the future, here's what you can do:

Talk to our experts who can offer you hands-on support and continuity for your learners.

Stay informed about the post-16 reforms through our [dedicated webpage](#).

Approvals

[The T Level approval window is now open:](#) If you'd like to deliver T Levels for the first time from September 2024, or deliver additional T Levels, you'll need to apply for approval via our website before 28 June 2024.

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April 2024 – service message

Important updates

- **VTQ second term-time checkpoint now open:** Thank you for submitting your information to us for the first VTQ term-time checkpoint. The second checkpoint is now open and the deadline for completion will be 3 May. Visit our [timely results webpage](#) for information on actions you need to take. You can also access [Ofqual's VTQ information hub](#) for further support.

Assessments and reviews

- [Model 5 V Cert assessment support:](#) As we approach the final stages of the assessment window for our Level 1/2 Technical Award qualifications, we want to remind you of some key dates and guidance. It's important to meet all deadlines outlined to ensure your learners receive accurate and timely results. Visit our [V Cert assessment support webpage](#) for more information on deadlines, how to access assessment materials, moderation and uploading of learner evidence, the benefits of online assessment and sources of support.

- [Model 4 V Certs internal assessments:](#) We want to share information about booking your learners onto the Model 4 V Certs non-examined assessment, withdrawing learners and upcoming submission dates. Please note that Model 4 V Certs require an external quality assurance review (Model 5 V Certs don't require EQA reviews). To book this, please contact your External Quality Assurer as soon as possible. As a reminder, EQA reviews must be completed by 31 July 2024 to ensure timely results.

- **[Using AI in summer 2024 external assessments:](#)** As we approach our summer series, we're communicating with your centre to reiterate expectations on the use of AI in external assessments. We particularly want to address:

  - the prevalence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and risks
  - the overall approach of the JCQ guidance (learners must submit work which is their own, and that submitting work which is not their own, and/or which shows other AI misuse, will be investigated for potential

malpractice and could result in disqualification from an assessment, or qualification overall)

- o qualification specific guidance (for example, qualifications such as T Level Employer Set Project (ESP) and OS assessments, or CACHE Level 3 extended response essays, which allow access to the internet for some or all parts of the assessment).

Qualification updates

- **Horizons qualification updates document:** View our recent qualification updates and maintenance information, such as qualification withdrawals, new qualifications and qualification amendments.
- **Changes to fees for CACHE qualifications:** Find out more about fees that are applied if learners are booked under incorrect themes on our CACHE qualifications.
- **Now approved - new early years educator provision:** We're pleased to announce that from 1 September 2024, we'll have an updated suite of early years educator (EYE) qualifications, ranging from Levels 3 to 5, that meet the new Department for Education (DfE) EYE criteria. The DfE has approved all of the qualifications that we submitted, and we'll publish draft qualification specifications as soon as possible.
- **Functional Skills Qualification in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) reminder:** This ICT qualification is now withdrawn, and we're no longer able to take learner registrations. Take a look at the key dates for the final external assessments.

Resources and support

- Education and Early Years teaching assistant (TA) forum events: Our free TA forum events offer interactive CPD opportunities, to help teaching assistants build on their existing knowledge and skills in supporting children and young people within teaching and learning environments. Sign up for the next event in May, which will focus on supporting literacy skills.
- Functional Skills English and maths CPD events: Sign up for a recap on spelling, punctuation and grammar in our 'Let your SPaG shine' session on Tuesday 21 May, or a maths CPD session for delivery staff supporting FS maths, covering ratios at Level 1 and Level 2 on Wednesday 22 May.
- **V Cert support – prepare to teach Q&A drop-in sessions:** We want to support providers in successfully delivering the V Cert Level 1/2 Technical Award and we're offering a series of drop-in sessions to answer any questions you may have about the planning and delivery of these qualifications. **Find out more**.
- Monthly exams officer update: View this month's update which includes important reminders specifically for exams officers, upcoming events and resources to help you.

Approvals

- The T Level approval window is still open: If you'd like to deliver T Levels for the first time from September 2024, or deliver additional T Levels, you'll need to apply for approval via our website before 28 June 2024.

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May 2024 – service message

Summer assessment reminders – covering key dates schedules, T Levels, V Certs and EQA reviews

- **Employer Set Project (ESP) evidence upload deadlines:** We want to remind you of the upcoming deadlines for the upload of evidence for T Level ESPs. Take a look at our Key Dates Schedule for the deadlines and our summer assessment series webpage for more information.
- **V Cert assessment support:** Visit our V Cert assessment support webpage for more information on key dates for Model 5 V Certs, how to access assessment materials, moderation, the benefits of online assessment and sources of support.
- **Summer assessment series:** New resources have also been published by Ofqual in relation to V Cert summer awarding and these can be found below:
    - VTQ results infographic - top tips for exams officers
    - video on LinkedIn.

You can also refer to Ofqual's VTQ Information Hub for more useful information and key dates.

EQA reviews reminder

- We wanted to remind you that EQA reviews should be arranged as soon as possible with a planned date of no later than 31 July 2024, to guarantee results can be issued in time for results day. Please ensure you claim certificates following your EQA review, so that these can be processed on time and signed off by your EQA if you don't have DCS.

Important information and actions: qualification updates and withdrawals

- **Assessment Timetable Consultation 2024/25 and 2025/26:** We'd like your feedback on our proposed **Assessment Timetable** for 2024-25 and 2025-26, which we'll then review and publish a narrative response to, before confirming a final version by 1 July 2024. To respond, please review the proposed Assessment Timetable for 2024-25 and 2025-26, and then complete this form with your feedback by the 14 June 2024.
- **Horizons qualification updates document:** As a result of the post-16 qualification reforms and new criteria from the Department for Education (DfE), a number of qualifications are being withdrawn from funding – these are all listed in this month's Horizons document. However, we're delighted to have some fantastic replacement qualifications in place and an updated suite of early years educator (EYE) qualifications that meet the new criteria coming into effect from September 2024. Please ensure you and your colleagues read the Horizons document in detail for more information, and we'll be sharing more updates in the coming weeks to support you in transitioning to the new qualifications.

- **Functional Skills Qualification in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) reminder:** This ICT qualification is now withdrawn, and we're no longer able to take learner registrations. Take a look at the key dates for the final external assessments.

T Level approvals reminder - window still open

- If you'd like to deliver T Levels for the first time from September 2024, or deliver additional T Levels, you'll need to apply for approval via our website before 28 June 2024. If you need support with applying for approval, please watch this handy video.

Resources and support - Functional Skills, V Certs and our upcoming Professional Development Week

- Functional Skills English and maths CPD events: Sign up to our upcoming English and maths CPD events, including Teach, Share, Transform, contextualising English and formative assessment strategies for maths.

- **V Cert Level 1/2 Technical Awards support webinars:** Join us for a series of upcoming 'Prepare to Teach' Q&A drop-in sessions, covering planning and preparation for the delivery and formative assessment of our V Cert Level 1/2 Technical Awards. Find out more.

- **NCFE Professional Development Week:** After its success in December, our Professional Development Week will be back from 1-5 July, for a week packed with live and recorded CPD sessions to enhance your teaching and development. Find out more and sign up.

Upcoming student sector conferences – Health and Early Years

Health: Join us on 25 June for an immersive journey where we'll delve into the dynamic realm of technology in healthcare. With a special emphasis on the healthcare landscape, discover how healthcare professionals are leveraging technology to enhance patient outcomes. We're delighted to confirm our speakers so far**:**

- **Tracey Hutchinson:** Provider Development Officer, NCFE
- **Guy Plowman:** Institutional Sales Manager, RCNi.

Early Years and Education: Join us on 6 June for our next virtual conference focusing on 'enriching professional practice and communities', where students will learn about the benefits of collaborative expertise when working towards best outcomes for babies, young children and their families.

Monthly exams officer update

View this month's update which includes important reminders specifically for exams officers, upcoming events and resources to help you.

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June 2024 (No communications)

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July 2024 – service message

Fees and pricing for 2024-25 and introduction of late registration fees
We recently communicated [an update to our fees and pricing for 2024-25](#) to heads of centres and finance contacts.

We also wanted to make you aware that we're introducing a late registration fee from 1 August 2024 for all of our qualifications (with the exception of V Certs and Functional Skills, and T Level late fees which are calculated differently).

This is to ensure we're able to support learners at every stage of their journey and that we have the appropriate resources in place to support you during busy assessment periods.

As this fee will apply to any new learner registrations with a learner start date of 1 August 2024 onwards, if you have any outstanding learner registrations to make, we recommend that you make these before 1 August 2024. [Find out more](#)

Preparing for results release

T Level results: Now that the summer series of T Level assessments has finished with over 90 assessments being delivered to students, [please take a look at some key information on next steps and results release](#).

V Cert assessment support: This summer marked the delivery of the new model of V Certs for the first time, with around 35,000 learners completing these Level 2 assessments. [Please take a look at the key information on next steps and results release](#).

Important update: release of the 2024-25 V Cert Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) brief - 17/07/2024

We wanted to update you about the release date for the 2024-25 Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) brief for our Level 1/2 Technical Award (V Cert) qualifications.

Last year, we released our NEA assessment brief on 1 September to give you and your colleagues time to familiarise yourselves with the requirements and context of the brief ahead of delivering the live assessments to learners.

Throughout the first NEA assessment, we received feedback from teachers, and we're using this valuable insight to make some improvements to support the NEA process in 2024-25.

[Find out more about the support available](#)

[**EQA reviews**](#)

We want to remind you that External Quality Assurance (EQA) reviews should be arranged as soon as possible with a planned date of no later than 31 July 2024, to guarantee results can be issued in time for results day. Following the EQA review, certificate claims must be made with 48 hours and for centres with Direct Claim Status (DCS), all certificate claims must be completed by 31 July 2024.

For further information, please refer to our [preparing for external quality assurance reviews](#) webpage.

Changes to EQA review deadlines for summer 2025: We wanted to let you know that from summer 2025 onwards, we'll be bringing forward the completion date for EQA reviews for VTQs to 30 June. [Read more](#).

Qualification updates and withdrawals

Horizons qualification updates document: View our recent qualification updates and maintenance information including qualification withdrawals, new qualifications, and qualification amendments.

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) – AI in assessments survey

JCQ are looking for your views on the use of AI in assessments, and their recent survey, AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications, has been extended to Friday 19 July. Your feedback will be used to help improve future versions of the guidance that JCQ produces on this matter, and it should take no more than 5 minutes. Complete the survey here.

Resources and support - Functional Skills, Professional Development Week, and Assessor and IQA training

Coming soon: Functional Skills Entry Level maths vocabulary lists

To help learners achieve in Functional Skills and better understand the contexts in our assessments, we're introducing new vocabulary lists with all our Entry Level maths assessments. The vocabulary lists will be available for all entry level maths assessments booked from 1 September 2024. If you have any questions or would like more information, please email provider.development@ncfe.org.uk.

English Functional Skills Speaking, Listening and Communicating (SLC) Assessment Tasks

We're making updates to the Assessor Guidance document for SLC, which will include support and guidance on how to lay out the SLC task and brief that centres design. The updated guidance will give you the flexibility to contextualise the SLC assessment component, while ensuring adequate evidence is provided to demonstrate the learners understanding of the task. Keep an eye out for the new guidance in the qualification pages throughout July.

Functional Skills training: Join our Provider Development team for their upcoming July CPD sessions, aimed at Functional Skills maths and English teachers. These sessions include 'Error analysis for effective feedback' for maths delivery staff and 'Functional English' for English delivery staff. Sign up now.

New assessor and internal quality assurance (IQA) training: We've got several new upcoming Assessor and IQA training events, which provide a great opportunity to meet with assessment and IQA professionals and like-minded practitioners to expand your knowledge and understanding of IQA, assessment, and our qualifications. Book onto our Assessor or IQA events today.

Professional Development Week: Last week, our second Professional Development Week took place, with a range of informative CPD sessions covering topics from AI in education to supporting SEND learners. If you missed it or were unable to make the sessions, don't worry! You can recap all the sessions here.

Monthly exams officer update

View this month's update which includes important reminders specifically for exams officers, upcoming events and resources to help you.

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