Technical Qualifications

Key Stage 4 Technical Awards Information for new centres

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City & Guilds Technical Awards - Information for new centres

Welcome! As a centre new to delivering City & Guilds Key Stage 4 Technical Awards, we want to support you to make sure your learners have the best experience possible.

City & Guilds Technical Awards are part of a suite of Technical Qualifications for 14-19 year-olds.

Level 2 Technical Awards for 14-16 year olds	120 GLH qualifications not specific to job roles and usually studied alongside GCSEs. Available in three sectors.
Level 2 Technical Certificates and Level 3 Tech Levels for 16-19 year olds	Qualifications from 360 GLH plus to develop specialist skills and knowledge to prepare for a particular job or career. Available in 13 sectors. Level 3 qualifications carry UCAS points to enable progression to university.

Getting started

Before starting delivery, it is important that you read the Qualification Handbook to familiarise yourself with the content and assessment requirements of the qualification.

City & Guilds has a range of resources to help you, including:

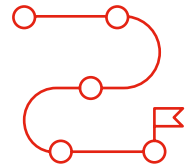
- Resource list for each Technical Award
- Teaching learning and assessment guide
- Marking and moderation guide
- Sample assessment materials (theory exam and synoptic assignment)
- FAQs
- Sector specific delivery support recorded presentations.

Starting delivery

Timeline for the academic year

For timelines and 'How to book assessments' guidance, please see the Support section of the City & Guilds website.

Registration	Register your learners via Walled Garden by October 27.
Exam timetable	Published in the autumn term each year with the dates and times of the theory exam in the spring and summer terms. The dates for the synoptic assessment window will also be published.
Booking assessments	Theory exams and synoptic assessments need to be booked via Walled Garden for learners taking their assessments in the academic year.
Synoptic assignments	Released to centres in the autumn term and available on the City & Guilds website in the assessment materials section for the relevant qualification. Assignments are password protected and passwords are available in Walled Garden. The last date for the submission of marks and evidence to City & Guilds via the moderation portal will be published in the exam timetable.
Resits/retakes	For the updated Technical Awards, due to their assessment structure, this means that both the examination and synoptic assessment must take place at the end of the programme. Details of assessment dates will be published in the assessment and examination timetable.



Assessment of Technical Awards

To allow candidates to certificate within the KS4 year if they fail the examination on their first attempt, we have amended the grading arrangements (see Grading section in the qualification handbook); removing the requirement to pass both assessments for certification.

Planning for assessment

We understand that you may be delivering the City & Guilds Technical Awards over one, two or three years in years 9, 10 or 11.

There are a number of new features in the updated Technical Awards. These have been introduced to meet new design principles set out by the Department for Education (DfE) and to ensure compliance and approval for the 2024 Performance Tables.

- There will no longer be a Spring exam series - instead there will be a Summer and Autumn exam series
- There will be a paper-based version of the exam only, and a synoptic assignment
- The 'Terminal assessment' rule will apply.

For the KS4 2024 Performance table qualifications, Ofqual introduced the requirement for a 'terminal rule' relating to the examination which specifies:

"An assessment by examination must be taken at the end of a pupil's course of study ("terminal assessment") and this must contribute at least 40% of the total marks available for the qualification. Ofqual's QLCs require that pupils must use towards their final overall grade the result of the assessment by examination sat in the series in which they are completing the course. This should typically lead to candidates sitting the assessment by examination at the end of year 11."

Theory exam

The exam is designed to assess the learner's depth and breadth of understanding across content in the qualification at the end of the period of learning, using a range of question types. The exam contributes to 40% of the overall mark.

Exams will all be paper based. The first opportunity to sit the exam for inclusion in the 2024 performance tables will be summer 2024. The dates and times of the exam are published in exam timetable which is available in the autumn term.

Exam papers are dispatched to centres two weeks before the exam date and centres are given log-in details approximately ten days before the exam date to access the online exam. Centres must comply with JCQ's requirements for keeping question papers and other exam materials secure.

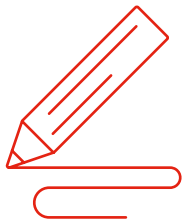
Exams must be conducted under invigilated examination conditions. See JCQ requirements for details.

Results of exams will be made available in Walled Garden.

The terminal assessment rule applies to Technical Awards whereas an assessment by examination must be taken at the end of a pupil's course of study.

Synoptic assessment

The synoptic assessment is a controlled assessment that is set by City & Guilds. The assignment includes written and practical tasks and has to be undertaken within a set window (February to May). The synoptic assignment is uploaded onto the City & Guilds website in the autumn term on the assessment materials section under the qualification documents webpage. The password to access the synoptic assessment is available in Walled Garden.



The first opportunity to sit the synoptic assignment will be spring 2024. There is only one opportunity in each academic year for learners to complete the synoptic assignment. Learners who fail the synoptic assignment will have one opportunity to resit. The resit opportunity will be in the next academic year. The assignment will be different to the assignment set for the previous year.

The synoptic assignment is marked by the centre's tutors and subject to internal standardisation prior to being externally moderated by City & Guilds. Learners will be assessed against the assessment objectives.

Learners have to complete a substantial piece of work which they carry out independently. Tutors cannot provide feedback to learners during the summative assessments for the assignment, as it is learners' independent performance that is being assessed. Learners may only be supported in understanding what they have to do and given general pointers, without specific feedback on their actions or the quality of work.

Any support provided must be recorded on the tutor's assessment forms.

Time allowed for the synoptic assessment is given in the synoptic assignment pack which is produced each year. The time allowed gives learners time to plan, prepare, complete the tasks and produce the evidence. Learners do not have to complete the assignment in one day. Centres can plan the schedule for the synoptic assignment according to the volume of learners, the physical resources and tutor availability.

A different version of the synoptic assignment will be provided each year, but the evidence produced will be internally marked using the same marking grid each year, in order to support comparability across versions.

Internal standardisation must be carried out on the centre's marking of the synoptic assignment to make sure all assignments at the centre have been marked to the same standard. It is the Internal Quality Assurer's (IQA's) responsibility to ensure that internal standardisation has taken place, and that tutors receive training including the use of sample synoptic assignments and marking grids.

City & Guilds Moderation Portal

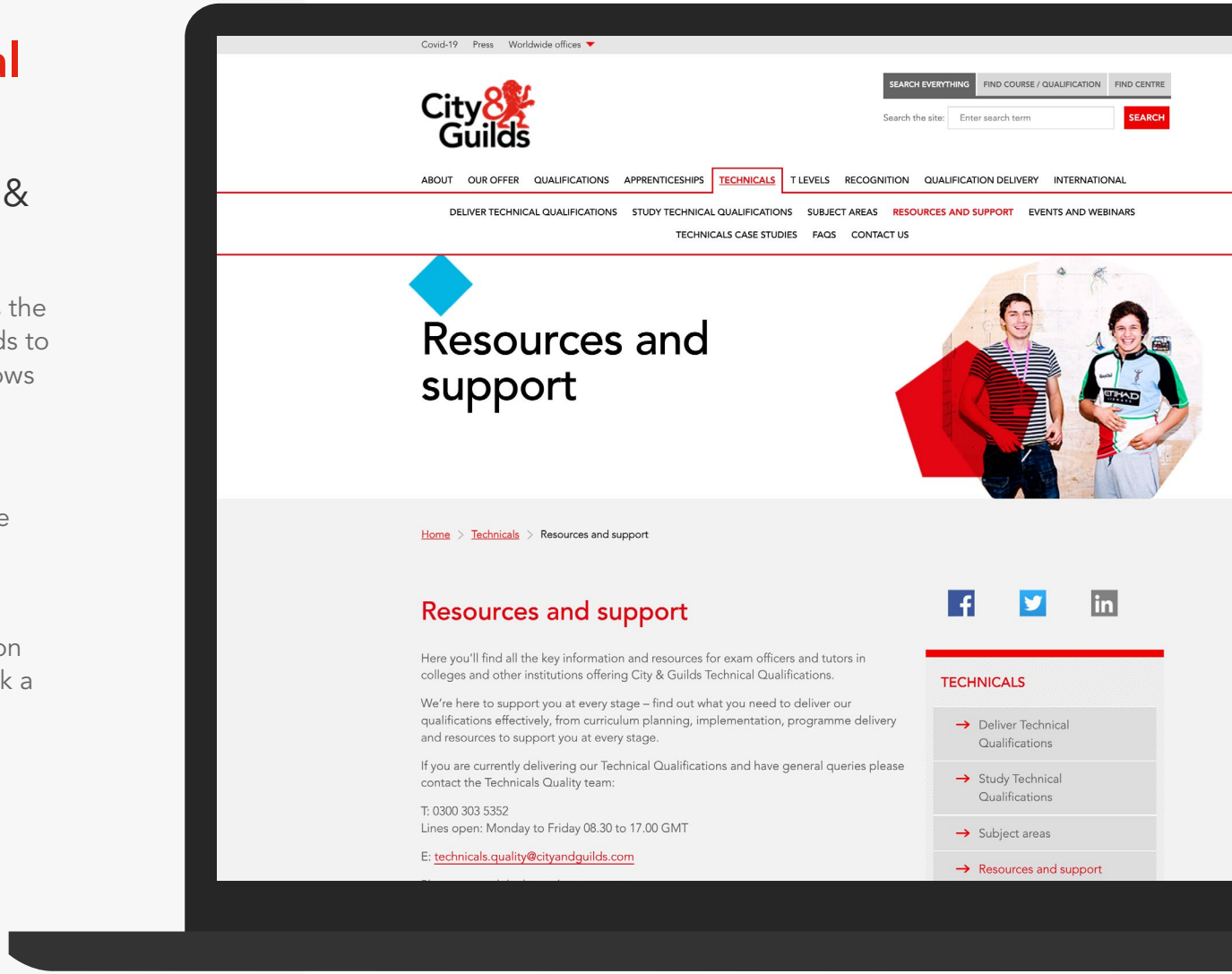
Marks and evidence for the synoptic assignment have to be submitted to City & Guilds Moderation Portal.

The Moderation Portal is an online platform which supports the moderation process. Centres are given logins and passwords to access the moderation platform. The Moderation Portal allows centres to:

- Enter marks for learners' synoptic assignments
- Upload samples of evidence, including learners' evidence and tutor's assessment forms, as per the requirements of the assessment.

City & Guilds moderators also have access to the Moderation Portal to view the centre's marks for each learner and remark a proportion of learners' work.

Information on marking and moderation procedures and the Moderation Support centre guide can be found on the Resources and Support page of the City & Guilds website.



External moderation of the Technical Award

City & Guilds uses external moderators to carry out sample remarking of centre-marked work to determine how closely the centre's marking aligns with the common standard implemented by the moderators.

Their marks act as a benchmark to inform City & Guilds whether the marking is in line with the national standard. The outcome of this exercise dictates whether, and by how much, a centre's marks should be adjusted in order to bring them into alignment with the set standard.

City & Guilds requires both tutors and learners to sign declarations of authenticity. If the tutor is unable to sign the authenticity statement for a particular learner, then the learner's work cannot be accepted for assessment.

Grading

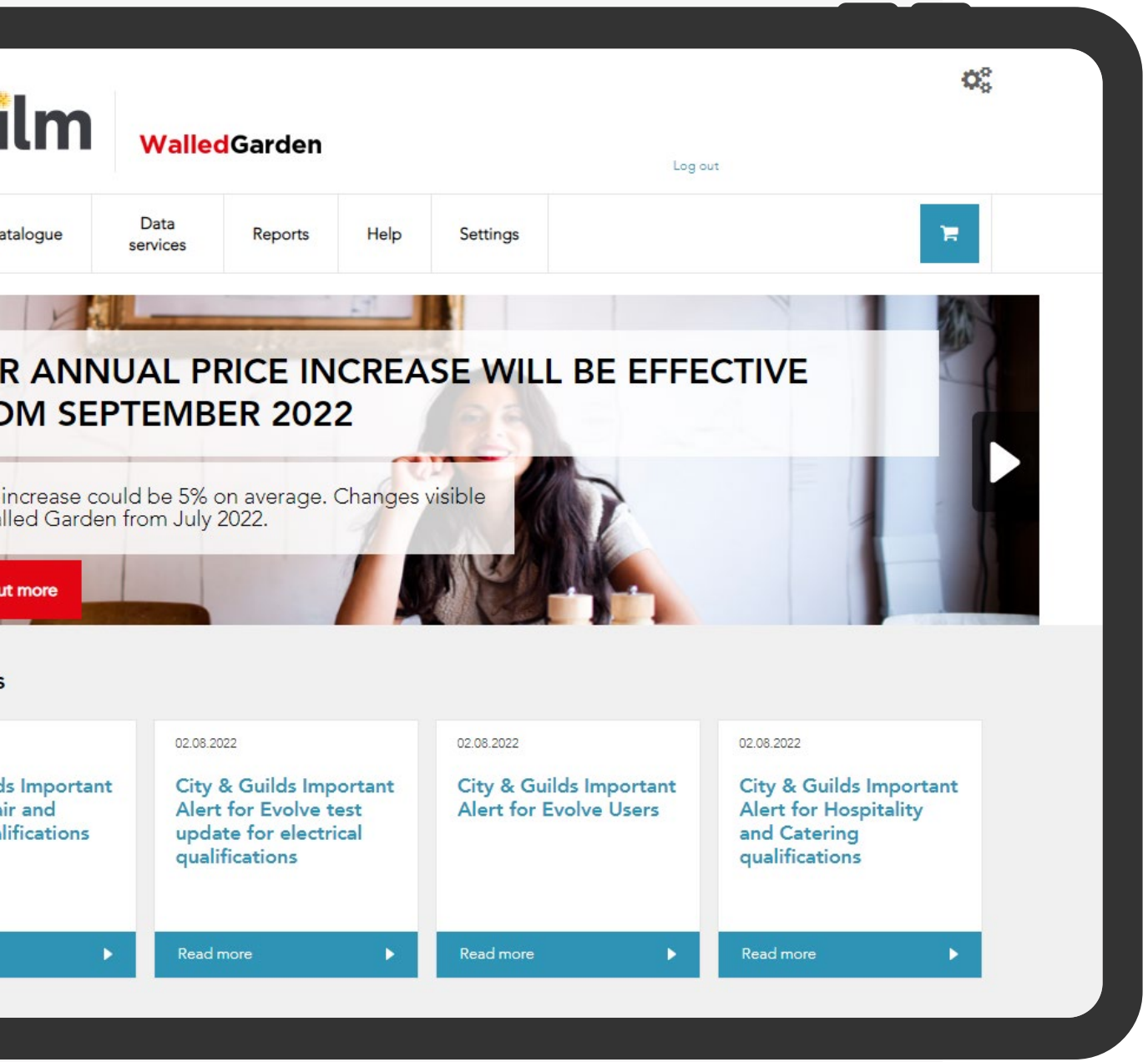
The overall qualification grade will be calculated based on the aggregation of the points awarded for the learner's achievement in the theory exam and the synoptic assessment which are converted into grades. Technical Awards will be reported on a four grade scale: Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction*.

City & Guilds Grade	GCSE performance points
D*	8.5
D	7
M	5.5
P	4

Both assessments (the exam and the synoptic assignment) **must** be achieved at a minimum of Pass for the qualification to be awarded. Learners who fail to reach the minimum standard for the Pass grade for an assessment will not have a qualification grade awarded and will not receive a certificate. The contribution of assessments towards the overall qualification grade is set out in each Qualification Handbook.

The table below shows how the grades awarded for Technical Awards compare to those of GCSEs.

Ofqual may alter these grades in line with GCSE grading 9-1 where a formula may be applied to allocate the percentage of learners who can be awarded a Distinction*.



Results

Results of learner's theory test and synoptic assignment are made available in Walled Garden.

Key Stage 4 performance tables

Up to three technical awards count alongside GCSEs in school performance tables in the 'open' bucket/ group (see note on discounting below).

The open bucket can include Technical Awards and other GCSEs such as drama, dance, PE, art and design etc. From 2016, the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 performance measures will count up to three Technical Awards as part of the 'open' group of subjects. The other five slots are reserved for English, Maths and other EBacc subjects (history, geography, science, computer science and languages).

Progress 8 is a performance measure which measures the progress made by the learner across 8 subjects from the end of Key Stage 2 (the end of primary school) to the end of Key Stage 4.

Further information can be found on the government's website.

Attainment 8 is a performance measure which measures the learners' attainment across 8 subjects (the eight best grades in the qualifications taken at the end of Key Stage 4) at Level 2 (GCSE Grade 4 and above).

Discounting codes

Technical Awards are given a discounting code by DfE if they have significant overlap with the content of other GCSEs and/or Technical Awards.

This means that two qualifications with the same discounting codes cannot both count in the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 performance measures.

Want to offer other City & Guilds Technical qualifications?

If you are an approved City & Guilds centre, you will need to submit a qualification approval form to offer other Technical qualifications.

You may need an external quality assurance (EQA) visit – this will depend on the centre, the qualification applied for and other factors that are assessed as part of information provided in the centre/qualification approval application.

About City & Guilds

Since 1878 we have worked with people, organisations and economies to help them identify and develop the skills they need to thrive. We understand the life changing link between skills development, social mobility, prosperity and success. Everything we do is focused on developing and delivering high-quality training, qualifications, assessments and credentials that lead to jobs and meet the changing needs of industry.

We work with governments, organisations and industry stakeholders to help shape future skills needs across industries. We are known for setting industry-wide standards for technical, behavioural and commercial skills to improve performance and productivity. We train teams, assure learning, assess cohorts and certify with digital credentials. Our solutions help to build skilled and compliant workforces.

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