

# **Assessment Timetable**

**Key Dates 2024-2025**

## Vocational and Technical Qualifications 2024-2025

Ofqual is working with awarding organisations again this academic year to support the safe and timely delivery of Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQ) results. The plan applies to qualifications that are used for progression to further or higher education, are included in performance tables and/or have UCAS tariff points associated with them.

VTCT Skills has a proud history of ensuring results are delivered on time across our suite of Performance Table Qualifications. Ofqual's measure to embed timely delivery of VTQ results will ensure that transparency of information, key dates and term time check in points is standardised across all awarding organisations delivering vocational and technical qualifications.

VTCT Skills publishes its key dates document to set out the timeline and deadlines for the delivery of its Performance Table Qualifications each academic year.

VTCT Skills actively engages with its centres to remind them of deadlines and signpost to support guides and information ahead of each of the assessment series. Additionally, VTCT Skills has embedded term time checkpoints into its existing processes to proactively contact centres ahead of the exam week and certification claim deadline.

VTCT Skills will use the term-time checkpoints to cross reference registration data with schedules for the Summer 2025 assessment series, and track certificate claims to ensure that all eligible learners receive results and are able to progress onto the next stage of their education or employment journey.

A centre's failure to engage with the checkpoints has the potential for an adverse effect for their learners and may result in sanctions being applied.

VTCT Skills Exam Officers' Hub contains useful links and guidance for Exams Officers to use throughout the academic year: <https://www.vtctskills.org.uk/existing-centres/resources/examination-officers/>

### Checkpoint 1

Centres confirm all of the learners that they expect to certificate this academic year.



### Checkpoint 2

VTCT Skills confirms that it has all of the information or evidence needed from centres to ensure that it can process a result for each learner.



### Certification

Centres to submit a certification claim for all learners that they wish to claim the result.

## Guidance Information

The key dates within this Assessment Timetable document relate to VTCT Skills qualifications that are approved for inclusion in the DfE's Performance Tables.

A list of qualifications that these key dates are related to is shown in **Appendix A**.

Learners are limited to two attempts at the external assessment. Learners who fail to achieve the required Pass mark or are deemed to have underperformed, are permitted **ONE** retake opportunity. The retake must be at a different examination and sitting and it is expected that further teaching/tuition would have taken place.

## Scheduling Learners for an External Examination

Centres are able to enter learners into the assessment series shown in the key dates documents for each qualification type. Schedules that are made before the deadline to schedule entries can be completed by the centre.

Centres wishing to make entries after this deadline will need to request a late entry with the Assessment Department by emailing [exams@vtctskills.org.uk](mailto:exams@vtctskills.org.uk). Any late entries will be subject to an additional late entry fee as detailed in VTCT Skills Qualifications and Fees document.

## Assessment Date

Centres are required to schedule all learners sitting the same examination at the same time on the same day. For centres where they have large cohorts and will need to stage different sittings of the examinations, centres will need to notify VTCT Skills and apply for this schedule to be approved and created. Centres will need to complete an 'Assessment Date Variation Form'. Copies of this form are available from [customersupport@vtctskills.org.uk](mailto:customersupport@vtctskills.org.uk) or [exams@vtctskills.org.uk](mailto:exams@vtctskills.org.uk)

## Secure Exam Browser

As part of our continued efforts to ensure the integrity of our assessments, VTCT Skills has a requirement for all centres taking Performance Table Qualification examinations to install a Safe Exam Browser (SEB).

The free, Safe Exam Browser is a web browser environment to carry out e-assessments safely. The software turns any computer temporarily into a secure workstation. It controls access to resources like system functions, other websites and applications and prevents unauthorised resources being used during an exam. SEB locks access to other online applications including email and web browsers, ensuring that learners cannot access other windows or tabs whilst undertaking their exams.

**Learners will not be able to access their examinations if this software has not been installed.**

Please follow the link: <http://www.vtctskills.org.uk/ptqexams> to download and install the browser.

## Exam Week Support

Customer Support will send an email to centres to provide information and signpost to support guides ahead of each exam week.

There is out of hours support for centres who have scheduled examinations after 5pm. Ahead of exam week, an email about this dedicated support will be sent to all centres with out of hours examinations.

## Instructions for Conducting Examinations

VTCT Skills Instructions for Conducting Examinations set out the procedures to be followed for all written, onscreen and online examinations and other examinations for the following qualification types: VRQ, NVQ, SVQ and Technical Qualifications. These instructions are mandatory.

They are provided for the use of heads of centres, examinations officers, invigilators and all other personnel involved in the examination process, in plenty of time before the examinations, and should be available for reference during examination sessions.

It contains information about the responsibilities of the invigilator, and how and when to notify VTCT Skills if there is an issue during a live examination. The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that all relevant personnel are familiar with and adhere to these instructions.

## Late Arrival of Learners

Centres are encouraged to refer to VTCT Skills guidance documents sent to each Exams Officer ahead of the exam week. Additionally, centres should contact VTCT Skills Customer Support team +44 (0) 2380 684500.

## Reasonable Adjustments

VTCT Skills invites centres to submit applications for reasonable adjustments as early as possible to ensure that the appropriate support is in place in time for the learner to take the examination. Late requests may not be processed and approved in time and may result in the learner not having the appropriate support in place. Please refer to VTCT Skills Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy.

Exams Officers are encouraged to review the attendance sheets ahead of the day of the exam. Specifically, to confirm that they have schedules created for all learners that they expect to take the assessment, and to ensure that extra time has been added to those with approved reasonable adjustments.

## Modified Papers

VTCT Skills invites centres to submit applications for modified papers as early as possible to ensure that these can be in place in time for the learner to take the examination. Typically, VTCT Skills requires a minimum of 10 weeks' notice. Contact [exams@vtctskills.org.uk](mailto:exams@vtctskills.org.uk) to discuss individual applications.

## Paper-based Assessment

VTCT Skills offers a print and post service for series based examinations; there is a fee for this service. VTCT Skills will print and post examination papers to centres who have elected for learners to sit their examinations on paper. These will be sent to the Exams Department at the centre to arrive in time for the scheduled exam.

The deadlines for scheduling paper-based examinations are shown in the tables on page 5, 6 and 7.

Each paper based assessment script is printed with each learner's name and a unique QR code for each learner. It is essential that learners are given the correct script.

There is a fee charged for transfer of learner's work from incorrect documentation.

## Return of Paper-based Assessments

VTCT Skills requires that all examination papers (used and unused), invigilation records, learner scripts and other documents (such as evidence for authorised absence) are dispatched to VTCT Skills Assessment Department on the same day that the examinations are completed.

**It is a requirement that all items are to be dispatched using a secure, signed for tracking service.** VTCT Skills may request this tracking number for examination papers being returned to VTCT Skills.

If it is not possible to do this on the same day as the examination, all documents are to be stored in the centre's secure location until no later than the following day. **Centres are required to notify VTCT Skills if the return of papers will be delayed by more than 24 hours.**

Centres are not permitted to hold examination papers for schedules throughout the exam week to send bulk batches of examination papers back to VTCT Skills.

There is a fee charged for late return of exam papers.

## Results Release

The dates for the release of external examination results for each assessment series are shown on the key dates. The embargoed release is for results to be accessed by the Exams Officer at the centre and general release is for results to be shared with the learners. Results are available to access on the e-testing system.

Centres are encouraged to use the embargoed release date to review the learners' results and resolve any issues ahead of general release to learners.

## Enquiries About Results

Please refer to VTCT Skills Enquiries and Appeals Policy. The deadlines for the submission of enquiries following the release of results from an assessment series are shown on the key dates.

## Certification and UCAS

### Data submission to UCAS

Certificates will be available to claim within Linx2Online from Thursday 10 July 2025 so to help us ensure your learners' achievement data is submitted to UCAS on time, training centres will need to claim for all Level 3 Technical Level Qualifications certificates by 17:00 on Monday 21 July 2025. Claims submitted after this date may result in university applications being declined. Our External Quality Assurers (EQAs) will be prioritising Technical Level Qualification claims.

To aid this process it is crucial that claim files are submitted accurately first time to avoid any delays in processing.

### Data submission for Performance Tables

Certificates will be available to claim within Linx2Online from the date of the General Release of Results. In order to ensure your learners' achievement data is submitted to the Department for Education to inform the Performance Tables, centres will need to claim for all eligible certificates by the deadlines:

- Technical Award – Thursday 31 July 2025
- Technical Certificate – Monday 21 July 2025

### Support

Information on obtaining results, downloading results slips and claiming certificates for our Performance Table Qualifications can be found in the System Administration Guide on the website or alternatively, you can contact Customer Support on [+442380 684 500](tel:+442380684500) for assistance.

## Content

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## Schedule

Centres confirm the assessments they will take in an assessment series by creating a schedule for each learner.



## Assessment

### Examinations

Learners take their theory examination during the VTCT Skills Exam Week or on the VTCT Skills specified exam date.

### Synoptic assignments

Centres upload learner evidence by the deadline date specified by VTCT Skills.



## Results

VTCT Skills issues results for learners on the specified dates for each assessment series.

Embargoed release is for results to be accessed by the Exams Officer at the centre and general release is for results to be shared with the learners.

Results are available to access on the e-testing system.



## Certification

Centres claim certificates for learners in the Linx2Online system.



## Schedule

Centres confirm the assessments they will take in an assessment series by creating a schedule for each learner.



## Assessment

### Examinations

Learners take their theory examinations during the VTCT Skills Exam Week or on the VTCT Skills specified exam date.

### Graded Practical Assessments

Practical assessments are externally set, internally marked, graded and quality assured by centres, and subject to external verification by VTCT Skills.

### Graded Synoptic Assessment

The graded synoptic assessment is externally set, internally marked, graded and quality assured by centres, and subject to external verification by VTCT Skills.



## Results

### Examinations

VTCT Skills issues results for learners on the specified dates for each assessment series.

Embargoed release is for results to be accessed by the Exams Officer at the centre and general release is for results to be shared with the learners.

Results are available to access on the e-testing system.



## Certification

Centres claim certificates for learners in the Linx2Online system.

## Terminal rule

In order to meet the DfE's KS4 Technical Guidance and Ofqual's regulatory conditions the assessment by examination must be taken at the end of a learner's course of study ("terminal assessment"). Learners must use the result of the assessment by examination towards their overall qualification grade in the assessment series in which they are completing the course, typically this will be at the end of year 11.

## Assessment availability

VTCT Skills has made the assessment by examination available to learners in a February and May assessment series. Learners have one resit opportunity for the assessment by examination.

## Principles of the terminal assessment rule

- Learners must take the assessment by examination in the series in which they certificate
- Only the results for the assessment by examination that are required to fulfil the terminal rule achieved in the assessment series in which learners' certificate can contribute to the overall qualification grade
- If a learner takes the required assessment by examination prior to the assessment series in which they certificate, those results cannot contribute to the overall qualification grade – even if these are better than the results achieved subsequently
- In relation to school performance table points, as opposed to individual learner results, it is always the first qualification result which stands, irrespective of whether a learner re-certificates again at a later date

## What does this mean?

Learners on a two-year programme will typically take their exams in Year 11, as this is their final year of study. Learners are able to take the exam in either February or May in Year 11 as both options uphold the terminal rule requirement.

VTCT Skills has built safeguards into the key dates document through the timing of the release of results for the non-exam assessment to ensure that the terminal rule requirement is upheld. Additionally, VTCT Skills learner management system ensures that the final grade for the assessment by examination contributes to the overall qualification grade.

If learners take the assessment by examination in February of Year 11, they have the opportunity to resit the assessment by examination if they wish to before they finish their course at the end of the summer.

## What does not meet the terminal rule requirements?

Learners who take the assessment by examination in Year 10, and do not have a second attempt in Year 11. Centres use the attempt for the assessment by examination in Year 10 in the certification claim file for the learners' final qualification grade.

In these instances, VTCT Skills will void the learners' attempt for the assessment by examination.

## Worked examples

VTCT Skills has produced different worked examples that meet the terminal rule requirement in Customer Journey document. This is published on the [Documents tab](#) of the qualification page on the website.

| Assessment by Examination   | February 2025<br>Winter Series | May 2025<br>Summer Series    |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Deadline to schedule entries for assessment by examinations: paper and online | 10/01/2025                     | 21/03/2025 [Checkpoint 1] 🚩  |
| Deadline for late entries – <b>paper</b> (chargeable*)                        | 24/01/2025                     | 25/04/2025                   |
| Deadline for late entries – <b>online</b> (chargeable*)                       | 04/02/2025                     | 06/05/2025                   |
| <b>Exam date</b><br>Written examination                                       | 05/02/2025 – 9:30am            | 07/05/2025 – 9:30am          |
| Deadline for special consideration requests                                   | 12/02/2025                     | 14/05/2025                   |
| Embargoed release of results to centres                                       | 23/04/2025                     | 16/07/2025                   |
| <b>Release of results to learners</b>   | 24/04/2025                     | 17/07/2025 [Checkpoint 2] 🚩🚩 |
| Deadline for EARs   | 08/05/2025                     | 31/07/2025                   |
| Deadline for Appeals  | 22/05/2025                     | 14/08/2025                   |

| Non-exam Assessment                                  | May 2025<br>Summer Series    |
|--|------------------------------|
| Launch of non-exam assessment assignment brief       | 01/12/2024                   |
| Deadline to schedule entries for non-exam assessment | 21/03/2025 [Checkpoint 1] 🚩  |
| Deadline for late entries (chargeable*)              | 18/04/2025                   |
| <b>Deadline for uploading assignment evidence</b>    | 18/04/2025 – 23:59hrs        |
| Embargoed release of results to centres              | 16/07/2025                   |
| <b>Release of results to learners</b>                | 17/07/2025 [Checkpoint 2] 🚩🚩 |
| Deadline for EARs                                    | 31/07/2025                   |
| Deadline for Appeals                                 | 14/08/2025                   |

\*See VTCT Skills Qualifications and Fees document

| Event   | January 2025<br>Winter Series<br>Paper 1<br>Resits and first time entries | March 2025<br>Easter Series<br>Paper 1 and Paper 2<br>Resits and first time entries | June 2025<br>Summer Series<br>Paper 1 and Paper 2<br>Resits and first time entries |
|---|---|---|--|
| Deadline to schedule entries for examinations: paper and online | 13/12/2024  | 07/03/2025  | 30/05/2025 [Checkpoint 1] 🚩  |
| Deadline for late entries – <b>paper</b> (chargeable*)          | 02/01/2025  | 07/03/2025  | 30/05/2025   |
| Deadline for late entries – <b>online</b> (chargeable*)         | 10/01/2025  | 13/03/2025  | 06/06/2025   |
| <b>Exam week</b>  | <b>13/01/2025 – 17/01/2025</b>  | <b>17/03/2025 – 21/03/2025</b>  | <b>09/06/2025 – 13/06/2025</b>   |
| Deadline for special consideration requests                     | 24/01/2025  | 28/03/2025  | 20/06/2025   |
| Embargoed release of results to centres                         | 05/03/2025  | 14/05/2025  | 09/07/2025   |
| <b>Release of results to learners</b>                           | <b>06/03/2025</b>   | <b>15/05/2025</b>   | <b>10/07/2025 [Checkpoint 2] 🚩🚩</b>  |
| Deadline for EARs   | 20/03/2025  | 29/05/2025  | 24/07/2025   |
| Deadline for Appeals  | 03/04/2025  | 12/06/2025  | 07/08/2025   |

\*See VTCT Skills Qualifications and Fees document

## FAQs

### **What do I do if I have missed the entry cut-off date?**

Please contact our Customer Support Team for advice. There will be a charge for any late entries.

### **What support is there for centres?**

There is a suite of support guides for centres to access which will provide information about scheduling, accessing examinations and accessing results. These are published in the Linx2 area of the website.

Follow the Support Guides link and the system administration pack for the relevant qualification suite.

### **How do I access the grade boundaries for the examinations?**

Centres can contact Customer Support to request the grade boundaries for the examinations from an assessment system. These are available from the embargoed results day.

Contact: [customersupport@vtctskills.org.uk](mailto:customersupport@vtctskills.org.uk) or +44 2380 684 500

## Appendix A

### List of Qualifications

| Type                     | Qualification Number | Qualification Code | Qualification Title   |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---|
| Technical Award          | 603/7128/6           | CO2A5              | VTCT Skills Level 1/2 Technical Award in the Study of Hair and Beauty |
| Technical Qualifications | 603/0229/X           | BT2D1              | VTCT Skills Level 2 Diploma in Beauty Therapy                         |
|                          | 601/6982/5           | BT3D4              | VTCT Skills Level 3 Diploma in Beauty Therapy                         |
|                          | 601/6987/4           | BT3D6              | VTCT Skills Level 3 Diploma in Theatrical and Media Make-up           |
|                          | 603/0198/3           | HB2D1              | VTCT Skills Level 2 Diploma in Ladies Hairdressing                    |
|                          | 603/0201/X           | HB2D2              | VTCT Skills Level 2 Diploma in Barbering                              |
|                          | 601/6990/4           | HB3D1              | VTCT Skills Level 3 Diploma in Hairdressing                           |

### Document history

| Version | Details of amendments   | Date       |
|---------|---|------------|
| v2      | Addition of time to the deadline for uploading assignment evidence for the CO2A5 Technical Award. | 01/08/2024 |
| v3      | Date amended to 2025 page 9 for 'Release of results to learners'.                                 | 30/09/2024 |
| v4      | Addition of page with information of the Technical Award terminal rule requirement                | 05/11/2024 |
| v5      | Rebrand   | 27/01/2025 |