

Arrangements for the Award and Assessment of the Access to HE Diploma 2021-22

Information for students

September 2021

Contents

Introduction	1
Our priorities and the arrangements.....	2
QAA grading scheme: Grading the Access to HE Diploma	3
The grades	3
The grade descriptors.....	3
Using the QAA grading scheme	3
Quality assuring graded Access to HE Diplomas	4
Frequently asked questions	5
Why are the arrangements designed as they are?.....	5
How are you ensuring parity between Access to HE students and students studying A level and other Level 3 qualifications?	5
What types of adaptations have been made?	6
I am finding it difficult to study where lessons, materials and/or assessments have been adapted and am worried it will affect my grades and completing the Diploma, what should I do? .	7
I need additional support to help with my specific learning needs, will this be available if my course is adapted, and I have to work from home for example?	7
I need additional support to help with my specific learning needs and I am worried adaptations to my course will affect my grades and completing the Diploma, what should I do?	7
If there is a further lockdown (local or national) and I feel the work I produce during the lockdown does not reflect my previous performance, what do I do?	8
If there is a further lockdown which means I am unable to study because I am a key worker/carer or now have additional commitments, what should I do?	8
I am a continuing student who started my course before 1 August 2021. What do I do if I feel the work I produced during a lockdown (local or national) does not reflect my current or previous performance?	9
I am a continuing student who started my course before 1 August 2021 and I was unable to study and submit assessments during a lockdown (local or national). What should I do?	9
I am a continuing student who started my course before 1 August 2021 and my provider rescheduled my assessments to be submitted at a later date because of national lockdown(s). What do I do if I feel my performance is affected by these changes?	10
What are extenuating circumstances?.....	10
Can I apply for extenuating circumstances?.....	11
How do I apply for extenuating circumstances?	11
Can I apply for an extension to an assessment submission deadline?	11
How do I apply for an extension to an assessment submission deadline?.....	11
Can I apply for a break in learning?.....	11

How do I apply for a break in learning?	11
I am unable to access online lessons and materials, what should I do?	11
I have concerns about the support available to me, what should I do?	11
I feel my well-being and mental health are being affected, what should I do?	12
I am worried about my progression to university, what should I do?	12
When do I get my results?	12
How will you ensure my grades will be fair?	12
Can I appeal my grades?	13
What do the arrangements look like for units where I cannot submit all of the evidence required for the award of such units?	13
Why has there been no reduction to the content of the course?	13
I am not due to complete my studies until after 31 July 2022. What are the arrangements for the award and assessment of the Access to HE Diploma for me?	14
Further advice and information	14

Introduction

1 The Access to HE Diploma (the Diploma) is a nationally recognised qualification that is designed to provide preparation for study in higher education for adults returning to education. Individual Diplomas are validated and awarded by Access Validating Agencies (AVAs), according to regulations and specifications set by QAA.

2 For each Diploma there is an approved set of units of assessment in a number of different areas which are appropriate for the subject of the Diploma. Access to HE Diplomas are made up of 60 credits.

3 The COVID pandemic has caused significant disruption for us all and as we approach the new academic year, QAA is determined to ensure that we continue to support Access to HE students.

4 We know that the current environment continues to pose challenges for many students, and that Access to HE students often balance significant additional responsibilities alongside their studies. Therefore, the arrangements in place for the 2021-22 academic year will continue to **safeguard** against any potential future disruption to your learning as a result of the pandemic.

5 The arrangements in place for the 2021-22 academic year will:

- ensure that you have the opportunity to achieve your Diploma by being taught and assessed so that you are fully prepared for the transition to higher education
- provide flexibility so that your course provider can work with their AVA to put in place arrangements that fit local needs and also meet your individual needs as a student. By doing so, QAA aims to ensure equity of opportunity for all Access to HE students.

6 This year, students will be supported to complete their studies through possible changes to the delivery of teaching, assessment and units delivered on their course. Students may study for their course face-to-face, online or through a blended approach which may include both face-to-face and online delivery of teaching and assessment. QAA will work closely with your course provider and your AVA to ensure that quality, standards and student outcomes can be maintained.

7 It is QAA's priority to ensure that you receive fair and robust results and that the distribution of grades this year follows a similar pattern to the grades received in previous years. AVAs will continue to support course providers in implementing robust quality assurance mechanisms to ensure consistency is applied across all Access to HE Diplomas awarded. This will also ensure that your grades are as robust as those in previous years, and those in years to come, so that you and higher education providers can have confidence in them.

8 You will receive grades for all graded units you complete and these grades are provisional until they are confirmed by the Final Awards Board.

9 The following information is relevant to all full and part-time students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland who will be studying a QAA-recognised Access to HE Diploma in 2021-22. This includes:

- students who have started, or will start, their courses this academic year, that is, they start on or after 1 August 2021
- students who are continuing their studies, that is, they started their courses before 1 August 2021.

10 The information in this guidance is provided in the context of the most up-to-date advice for educational settings provided by the Department for Education (DfE) and Public Health England. Students and providers will be supported if advice from DfE or Public Health England means that adaptations need to be continued beyond 31 July 2022.

Our priorities and the arrangements

Our priorities this academic year are to:

- support AVAs, students and providers in meeting the challenges to learning and delivery presented by the pandemic
- continue the application of an Extraordinary Regulatory Framework (ERF), including publicly facing communications
- work in collaboration with AVAs, providers, DfE, Welsh Government and other regulatory bodies to build on the strategy for Access to HE during and after the pandemic, focusing on sustainability and protection of the Access to HE Diploma.

11 The table below summarises the arrangements.

Teach	Teaching the content of the Diploma should continue to ensure every student has the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to progress to higher education.
Assess	Assessments should continue where possible. If a student can be assessed, they should be assessed.
Adapt	Assessments, delivery and/or units can be adapted, where necessary and appropriate, to support students to continue learning.
Support	Support is available for students from their providers if a student is finding it difficult to learn or be assessed this academic year. In addition, further adaptations may be available. Students should discuss the options with their provider. Support may be available where providers are finding it difficult to deliver and assess the Access to HE Diploma this academic year. Providers should discuss the options with their AVA.
Quality assure	To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These can take account of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ adaptations to the delivery, assessment or units delivered on the Diploma ○ extenuating circumstances that may have affected student performance in assessment. <p>Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.</p>
Award	If a student can be assessed, they should be assessed and awarded, based on planned assessments. In those exceptional cases where a student cannot be assessed, the student may still be awarded unit(s) that make up the Diploma, through extenuation. The tutor/provider will draw upon either further adaptations to assessments or alternate lines of evidence to determine whether the unit can be awarded.
Results	Confirmed results will be released by AVAs to providers no later than the deadline for results to be uploaded to UCAS. Providers should check with their AVA when confirmed results will be released to them.
Appeal	If a student is not satisfied with their grades they can appeal.

QAA grading scheme: Grading the Access to HE Diploma

12 The [QAA grading scheme](#) applies to all assessments (that is, assessed work) that are completed as part of the Diploma. This grading scheme will be applied to the Access to HE Diploma you are studying this year. The following information outlines how assessment grades will be awarded.

13 A grade is awarded for every graded Level 3 unit that a student completes successfully as part of an Access to HE Diploma. All Diplomas comprise 45 credits from graded Level 3 units, and 15 credits from Level 2 or Level 3 units that are not graded. There is no overall grade for the Access to HE Diploma.

14 The number of grades awarded to a student depends on the number of graded Level 3 units required for the particular Access to HE Diploma. This number can vary because, although all Diplomas contain 45 credits from graded Level 3 units, these units can have a value of 3, 6 or 9 credits. So, for example, some Diplomas have a small number of 9-credit units, while others have a larger number of 3-credit units.

15 The grade awarded for each unit is shown on the achievement transcript that is issued with Access to HE Diplomas. The transcript also shows how many credits were awarded for each successfully completed graded or ungraded unit.

The grades

16 A grade of pass, merit or distinction can be assigned to each graded unit. There are no separate grade descriptors for 'not achieved'. A student may not achieve a unit if the specified learning outcomes for a unit are not met.

17 Where all learning outcomes are met on an ungraded unit, such units will receive 'achieved'.

The grade descriptors

18 There is a common set of broad, generic grade descriptors which are used as the basis for all grading judgements on all courses. The seven descriptors relate to different aspects of performance which are relevant to the assessment of a student's readiness for higher study. They are presented under the following headings:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Understanding of the subject | 5. Communication and presentation |
| 2. Application of knowledge | 6. Autonomy/independence |
| 3. Application of skills | 7. Quality |
| 4. Use of information | |

Using the QAA grading scheme

19 The assigned descriptors for a unit are made clear to students and are included in the assignment briefs provided to students by course tutors for each assignment.

20 Units are assessed in different ways - some are assessed through a single assessment (assignment); others involve more than one assessment. Integrated assessments may also be used to assess the learning outcomes of two or more different units through one piece of work. Irrespective of the nature or number of separate assessments or individual tasks used to assess the unit, the final outcome is a single unit grade which indicates the overall standard of performance for the unit.

21 When the tutor grades student assessments, they give assessment grades (of pass, merit or distinction) for each of the grade descriptors selected for use with the particular assignment(s) that have been designed to assess the unit.

22 Practices for managing the submission of student work, including drafts, late submissions and opportunities for resubmission or reassessment are governed by the regulations of the QAA grading scheme.

Quality assuring graded Access to HE Diplomas

23 In an environment where adaptation of assessment and delivery are possible, your Access Validating Agency (AVA) will put effective arrangements in place to support your provider in implementing robust quality assurance mechanisms that will ensure consistency is applied across all Access to HE Diplomas awarded.

24 To make sure that grades are fair and not unduly affected by the current situation, AVAs and providers will ensure that assessment grades go through a process of internal moderation, external moderation and standardisation. These processes will also be applied where assessments are adapted.

25 The AVA's operation of moderation ensures that consistent assessment standards are applied in all instances where Access to HE Diplomas or common units are delivered on more than one course or more than one occasion.

26 The AVA ensures that its providers operate rigorous internal moderation procedures which meet the AVA's requirements and which facilitate:

- the application of consistent standards of demand in assessment
- assessment design that maximises reliability and validity in assessment outcomes
- the consistent and accurate application of QAA assessment regulations.

27 The standardisation procedure provides opportunities for tutors, internal moderators and external moderators to share, discuss and, where necessary, recalibrate their expectations relating to the standards of work expected by:

- the requirements of any work at Level 2 or Level 3
- the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the specific units that they work with
- the grade descriptors.

28 If you have any further questions that are not addressed, please contact either your provider or AVA.

We have provided below some of the questions that you might have about the award of your Diploma. The questions will be updated regularly on our [FAQs page](#).

Frequently asked questions

Why are the arrangements designed as they are?

The arrangements for the award of the Access to HE Diploma in 2021-22 were designed to ensure that students studying an Access to HE Diploma during the pandemic had every opportunity to be assessed and acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate their progression into HE.

The Access to HE Diploma is not only intended to demonstrate that a student has achieved the necessary academic qualification to progress into higher education, but it is also designed to prepare students fully for their HE experience. Giving students every opportunity to be assessed will help them build confidence that they have the necessary tools to succeed. It will also provide assurance to higher education providers that a student is prepared for higher education.

Many Access to HE students have not studied for several years, and the teaching and learning model used to deliver the Diploma is designed to provide them with the best possible foundation for the discipline of higher education study.

This is why it is important that teaching and assessment continue whenever possible. However, during the pandemic it is possible that in some exceptional circumstances not all assessments will be able to take place. For students, the additional pressures of work, caring responsibilities or illness may affect their ability to engage with teaching, learning and assessment.

For providers, the current circumstances may make the delivery and/or assessment of the Diploma challenging. To ensure fairness, tutors can adapt assessments where these situations arise.

The key points are listed below.

- 1 Where all assessments for the qualification have taken place as normal or in an adapted form, they will determine the student's level of attainment.
- 2 To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These can take account of:
 - adaptations to the delivery, assessment or units delivered on the Diploma
 - extenuating circumstances that may have affected student **performance** in assessment.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

- 3 In those exceptional cases where a student cannot be assessed, the student may still be awarded unit(s) that make up the Diploma, through extenuation. The tutor/provider will draw upon either further adaptations to assessments or alternate lines of evidence to satisfy the award of unit.

We believe that the approach being taken is fair and ensures students have the best preparation possible to help them transition into higher education, whilst also providing additional support measures for students in recognition of the challenges of the pandemic.

How are you ensuring parity between Access to HE students and students studying A level and other Level 3 qualifications?

The arrangements for the award of the Access to HE Diploma provide as much parity with A levels and other Level 3 qualifications as we are able to give within the different cohorts of students studying courses which are intrinsically very different for all students.

There are necessary differences in the arrangements between Access to HE Diplomas and other Level 3 qualifications that facilitate progression to HE. The two main differences are:

- quality assurance processes designed to safeguard you if your academic performance is affected by the issues arising from the pandemic. To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These can take account of:
 - adaptations to the delivery, assessment or units delivered on the Diploma
 - extenuating circumstances that may have affected your performance in assessment.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

- award through extenuation which provides a safeguard in those exceptional cases where you **cannot** be assessed, you **may** still be awarded unit(s) that make up the Diploma, through extenuation.

These differences recognise the variations in the qualifications themselves and the students that study them. The Access to HE Diploma is:

- a credit-based qualification designed for adults wishing to enter higher education. Therefore, in order to achieve the award of the Diploma the student must complete the units that make up the programme of study
- usually completed by the majority of students over the course of one academic year
- assessed through continuous assessment. This means students complete assessments throughout their course of study
- not subject to an overall grade. Access to HE students receive a grade transcript which provides a breakdown of the grades achieved over their course of study.

The Extraordinary Regulatory Framework (ERF) introduced in response to the pandemic allows for providers to adapt the course to meet the needs of students to give them the best opportunity to complete. Adaptations are proposed at provider level because they know their students best and the local issues caused by the pandemic, and courses can be designed to meet those needs. The ERF has also been designed to allow for adaptations to be made according to students' personal circumstances.

What types of adaptations have been made?

Please contact your course tutor who will explain how your course has been adapted and may be adapted in the future.

- Assessment submission dates are set by course providers. If you are not able to meet the submission date, let your course provider know and you may be given an extension. Records of extensions granted will be held by course providers as part of their normal record keeping processes. This information will not normally be shared with universities.
- Providers can adapt assessments, delivery and/or changes to units delivered, **where necessary and appropriate**, to:
 - support teaching and learning, and assist in mitigating any possible effects of previous or future disruptions to teaching, learning and assessment relating to the pandemic
 - make assessments as manageable and flexible as possible, for example, to address the impact of compliance with social distancing or other public health guidance
 - safeguard against any future disruptions relating to the pandemic, such as local lockdowns or closure of facilities.

- It may mean that any exams planned will be replaced by a different type of assessment under the current arrangements.

Tutors will follow the QAA grading scheme when marking your assignments.

To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These will take account of:

- **adaptations to the delivery, assessment or units** delivered on the Diploma.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

I am finding it difficult to study where lessons, materials and/or assessments have been adapted and am worried it will affect my grades and completing the Diploma, what should I do?

You should contact your course provider if you are concerned about any adaptations made to your course in year. You may be able to get access to additional support or tools to help you study.

Providers can adapt assessments and delivery, where necessary and appropriate, to:

- support teaching and learning, and assist in mitigating any possible effects of previous or future disruptions to teaching, learning and assessment relating to the pandemic
- make assessments as manageable and flexible as possible, for example, to address the impact of compliance with social distancing or other public health guidance
- safeguard against any future disruptions relating to the pandemic, such as local lockdowns or closure of facilities.

To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These will take account of:

- **adaptations to the delivery, assessment or units** delivered on your Diploma.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

I need additional support to help with my specific learning needs, will this be available if my course is adapted, and I have to work from home for example?

You should contact your course provider if you are concerned about any adaptations made to your course, especially where you need additional support, to discuss what additional support or tools are available to help you.

I need additional support to help with my specific learning needs and I am worried adaptations to my course will affect my grades and completing the Diploma, what should I do?

You should contact your course provider if you are concerned about any adaptations made to your course, especially where you need additional support, to discuss what additional support or tools are available to help you.

To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These will take account of:

- **adaptations to the delivery, assessment or units** delivered on your Diploma.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

If there is a further lockdown (local or national) and I feel the work I produce during the lockdown does not reflect my previous performance, what do I do?

If you feel that the work produced during a local or national lockdown does not reflect your previous performance, please speak to your provider. Providers have arrangements in place to deal with such extenuating circumstances.

To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These will take account of:

- extenuating circumstances that may have affected your **performance** in assessment.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

If there is a further lockdown which means I am unable to study because I am a key worker/carer or now have additional commitments, what should I do?

Access to HE Diplomas have been designed to be responsive to changes in circumstances, for example, during a period of illness. If you are unable to study, please talk to your course provider about the best way to continue with your Diploma.

Options include:

- a making an application for extenuating circumstances
- b applying for an extension to assessment submission dates
- c a short pause¹ of less than four weeks - for example, if you are in self-isolation - this will not necessarily affect the planned end date of your course
- d a formal break or suspension in learning.

If your course is not publicly funded, your course provider will be able to discuss other options that may be available to you.

You should contact your course provider to agree the appropriate steps taken that will be based on both you and your course provider's circumstances.

In those exceptional cases where you **cannot** be assessed, you **may** still be awarded unit(s) that make up the Diploma, through extenuation. The tutor/provider will draw upon either further adaptations to assessments or alternate lines of evidence to determine whether the unit can be awarded. You should speak to your course provider regarding the circumstances under which an award through extenuation can take place.

¹ relates to publicly funded provision in England.

I am a continuing student who started my course before 1 August 2021. What do I do if I feel the work I produced during a lockdown (local or national) does not reflect my current or previous performance?

If you feel that the work produced during a national lockdown does not reflect your current or previous performance, please speak to your provider. Providers have arrangements in place to deal with such extenuating circumstances.

To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These will take account of:

- extenuating circumstances that may have affected your **performance** in assessment.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

I am a continuing student who started my course before 1 August 2021 and I was unable to study and submit assessments during a lockdown (local or national). What should I do?

If you were unable to study and complete your assessments during a national lockdown, please talk to your course provider about the best way to continue.

Options include:

- a making an application for extenuating circumstances
- b applying for an extension to assessment submission dates
- c a short pause² of less than four weeks - for example, if you are in self-isolation - this will not necessarily affect the planned end date of your course
- d a formal break or suspension in learning.

If your course is not publicly funded, your course provider will be able to discuss other options that may be available to you.

You should contact your course provider to agree the appropriate steps taken that will be based on both you and your course provider's circumstances.

In those exceptional cases where you **cannot** be assessed, you **may** still be awarded unit(s) that make up the Diploma, through extenuation. The tutor/provider will draw upon either further adaptations to assessments or alternate lines of evidence to determine whether the unit can be awarded. You should speak to your course provider regarding the circumstances under which an award through extenuation can take place.

² relates to publicly funded provision in England.

I am a continuing student who started my course before 1 August 2021 and my provider rescheduled my assessments to be submitted at a later date because of national lockdown(s). What do I do if I feel my performance is affected by these changes?

If the work was rescheduled and the volume of work is unmanageable, your provider will be able to advise you about the options available to you, for example, making an application for extenuating circumstances.

To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These will take account of:

- **adaptations to the delivery, assessment or units** delivered on your Diploma.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

What are extenuating circumstances?

Extenuating circumstances are external to study on your course. These are circumstances that you believe have affected your performance in assessment (or ability to study or engagement with your programme of study) and are usually either unforeseen or unpreventable and outside of your immediate control. The exact nature and severity of that impact will be dependent on a complex interaction of factors at provider (centre), Diploma and student (individual and/or cohort) level.

Providers have made adjustments to many aspects of teaching and assessment to account for the impact of the pandemic but if your studies are affected particularly badly it is worth following your provider's extenuating circumstances process. Please contact your provider to discuss the process of application.

In most cases, extenuating circumstances that affect achievement on individual units (for example, in relation to requests for extended deadlines) are handled at course level, and appropriate action and decisions taken according to the provider's approved procedures. Access Validating Agencies (AVAs) will have processes in place to also consider cases where extenuating circumstances have affected performance in more than one area, or in any other way that falls outside the provider's normal processes.

This will also include exceptional cases where extenuating circumstances have affected the completion or submission of work for assessment. In those exceptional cases where you cannot be assessed, you may still be awarded unit(s) that make up the Diploma, through extenuation. The tutor/provider will draw upon either further adaptations to assessments or alternate lines of evidence to determine whether the unit can be awarded. You should speak to your course provider regarding the circumstances under which an award through extenuation can take place.

If extenuating circumstances impact your performance, such circumstances will be taken into account when quality assuring grades, through the process of moderation and standardisation. To ensure grades are fair, equitable and robust, effective quality assurance arrangements will be applied. These will take account of:

- extenuating circumstances that may have affected your **performance** in assessment.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their peers.

These procedures have been developed through collaboration with our key stakeholders including Access Validating Agencies (AVAs), the Department for Education (DfE), Ofqual, Qualifications

Wales, UCAS and other organisations, and based on the experiences of students and providers during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years.

Can I apply for extenuating circumstances?

Yes. Access to HE providers and Access Validating Agencies (AVAs) already have in place procedures to allow you to identify extenuating circumstances that may affect your academic performance, should the current situation make studying difficult.

To discuss your specific circumstances, please speak directly to your course tutor.

How do I apply for extenuating circumstances?

Please contact your course tutor who will explain how to apply.

Can I apply for an extension to an assessment submission deadline?

Yes. Access to HE providers and AVAs already have procedures in place to allow you to apply for an extension, should the current situation make studying difficult.

To discuss your specific circumstances, please speak directly to your course tutor.

How do I apply for an extension to an assessment submission deadline?

Please contact your course tutor who will explain how to apply.

Can I apply for a break in learning?

Yes. Access to HE providers and AVAs already have procedures in place to allow you to take a break in learning should the current situation make studying difficult. You and your course provider can agree to suspend learning while you take a break. This allows you to continue later with the same eligibility that applied when you first started their learning.

Publicly funded courses in England and Wales already have provision for 'breaks/suspension in learning' or for a range of circumstances. Guidance from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (for providers in England) and Welsh Government (for providers in Wales) has information about the options available.

To discuss your specific circumstances, please speak directly to your course tutor.

How do I apply for a break in learning?

Please contact your course provider who will explain how to apply.

I am unable to access online lessons and materials, what should I do?

If you are unable to access online lessons and materials, you should contact your course provider.

I have concerns about the support available to me, what should I do?

If you have concerns about the delivery of your course or support available to you on course, you should follow your course provider's complaints process in the first instance. Details of this will be on their website and should be included in your student handbook. You can contact the Access

Validating Agency (AVA) that will issue your Diploma if you are still not satisfied with the outcomes of the complaint investigation.

I feel my well-being and mental health are being affected, what should I do?

We recognise the impact of the continued pandemic on the mental health of students, providers and AVA staff. While it is not possible for this to be addressed directly through our arrangements, the health and well-being of students, teachers and AVA staff has been considered in the development of the arrangements. We are aiming to reduce the impact where we can by allowing AVAs and providers to adapt the Diploma as necessary and appropriate to their local situation, and by providing clear and timely communications.

The challenges faced by adult students during the pandemic are varied and different to those faced by students studying other Level 3 qualifications, and we want to assure you that all comments, views and feedback received on course experiences are considered as part of our continual assessment of the arrangements.

Colleges may make adjustments to aspects of teaching and assessment to account for the impact of the pandemic. Your course provider will have in place mechanisms and services to support you and you should contact them to find out more about the student support services available to you.

I am worried about my progression to university, what should I do?

If you have any concerns about your progression to university, please speak to your course provider and the universities you have applied to.

Our priority is to support students to meet the challenges to learning and delivery presented by the pandemic and ensure that all Access to HE students are as well prepared as they can be for their transition to higher education and minimise lost learning as far as possible.

When do I get my results?

Confirmed results will be released to students after the Final Awards Board. The results will be released to you no later than the deadline for results to be uploaded to UCAS. Please speak to your course provider regarding the specific date you will receive your results.

How will you ensure my grades will be fair?

In addition to the principles of quality assurance aligned to the [QAA grading scheme](#), other quality assurance measures may also be applied. Your AVA will ensure that information and communications are made available to you on the quality assurance arrangements.

To make sure grades are fair, equitable and robust, AVAs and providers have processes in place to ensure grades go through internal moderation, external moderation and standardisation. These effective quality assurance arrangements will take into account:

- adaptations to the delivery, assessment or units delivered on the Diploma
- extenuating circumstances that may have affected student **performance** in assessment.

Based on evidence presented, a moderator may adjust grades either upwards or downwards to ensure you are not advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to your peers.

Can I appeal my grades?

AVAs and providers have processes in place to support students who feel their grades during their course of study do not reflect their performance. Your AVA will follow the procedures for student appeals as detailed in [Grading Scheme Handbook Section C: Using the Grade Descriptors in Assessment](#).

Please speak to your course tutor if you have concerns about assessment decisions relating to the achievement of credits or grade. You should discuss these with the relevant member of the course team when the assessed work is first returned to you. You may subsequently make a representation through the provider's formal procedures. You may appeal the grading decision that results as a consequence of a representation, but only on the grounds of evidence of administrative or procedural error.

What do the arrangements look like for units where I cannot submit all of the evidence required for the award of such units?

In those **exceptional** cases where you have been unable to submit all of the assessments required for the achievement of each unit, through no fault of your own, your tutor/provider will draw upon either further adaptations to assessments or alternate lines of evidence to determine whether the unit can be awarded. Sufficient evidence will need to be available for tutors/providers to make a judgement on the award of a unit.

This means that your tutors/providers may map to existing evidence or may need to ensure additional student assessment or alternative evidence is generated. The available evidence must relate to the learning outcomes of each unit being assessed. For graded units, the available evidence must relate to the learning outcomes of each unit being assessed **and** the grade descriptors assigned to the unit.

Continued teaching of the Diploma will be vital to ensure that the most complete sources of evidence are available on which the tutor/provider can base their judgement. Tutor/provider judgements can only be based on evidence of what you can do, not what you have the potential to achieve.

To ensure you have confidence in the results awarded this year, the evidence submitted to support the award of a unit will be subject to quality assurance arrangements.

On completion of the Diploma, you will receive a unit transcript. It will not be possible to identify from the transcript any units awarded through extenuation.

Why has there been no reduction to the content of the course?

Access to HE Diplomas are credit-based qualifications. In order for the Diploma to be awarded all credits must be achieved. It is not possible to reduce the number of credits required to achieve the Diploma. Therefore, evidence must be presented to demonstrate that all credit required for the award of the Diploma has been achieved.

You will receive a unit transcript that outlines the unit grades you have been awarded. If the credit volume was reduced, it would not be possible to make the award of the Diploma needed to support progression into higher education.

While it is not possible to reduce the number of credits, other adaptations, such as reducing the volume of assessment needed, are possible. In those exceptional cases where you **cannot** be assessed, you **may** still be awarded unit(s) that make up the Diploma, through extenuation. Your tutor/provider will draw upon either further adaptations to assessments or alternate lines of evidence to determine whether the unit can be awarded.

I am not due to complete my studies until after 31 July 2022. What are the arrangements for the award and assessment of the Access to HE Diploma for me?

The current guidance also applies to all students due to complete after 31 July 2022. Students and providers will be supported if advice from DfE or Public Health England means that adaptations need to be continued beyond 31 July 2022.

Further advice and information

If you need further information, please take a look at our [frequently asked questions](#) and/or contact your provider.

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