



Joint Council for
Qualifications^{CIC}



JCQ^{CIC} A2C Data Standards Specification

Section 5

Centre Assessed Outcomes and Award Claims

2022 Version

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Table of Contents

| | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1 | Process Summary | 3 |
| 1.1 | Centre Assessed Outcomes | 3 |
| 1.2 | Award Claims | 4 |
| 1.3 | Estimated Grades | 4 |
| 2 | Process Diagrams | 5 |
| 2.1 | Centre Assessed Outcomes Process Diagram | 5 |
| 2.2 | Award Claims Process Diagram | 6 |
| 3 | User Stories..... | 7 |
| 4 | Assumptions..... | 10 |
| 5 | Business Rules..... | 11 |
| 5.1 | Common Business Rules | 11 |
| 5.2 | Process-specific Business Rules | 11 |
| 6 | Service Level Recommendations | 14 |
| 7 | Transaction Types | 15 |
| 7.1 | Centre-to-Awarding Organisation Transaction Types..... | 15 |
| 7.2 | Awarding Organisation-to-Centre Transaction Types..... | 15 |
| 7.3 | New to Old Transaction Type Mapping Table | 16 |

1 Process Summary

This section contains detailed process design details for the Centre Assessed Outcome and Award Claim submission processes, which have been grouped together into one document due to their similarities. There are separate message types for Centre Assessed Outcomes and Award Claims. The business processes have been kept distinct to allow for different behaviours and rules.

These processes have been harmonised with common approaches. The requirements of each qualification for Centre Assessed Outcomes and Award Claims will be shown in the product catalogue so that centres have clear guidance to what is needed and by which date for each instance of an assessment. Common data approaches and processes underpin the use of these transactions.

1.1 Centre Assessed Outcomes

This process replaces the GQ-focused coursework marks submission within the JCQ EDI formats with transaction types which support the submission of any Centre Assessed Outcomes that a centre may need to submit to an awarding organisation, whether for general or vocational qualifications, and whether a mark or grade. For general qualifications the use of this transaction type will be restricted to the provision of outcomes for previously ordered qualification elements. For vocational qualifications some awarding organisations will accept this transaction type *in lieu* of an order transaction; essentially submitting the outcome and placing an order in a single transaction.

With the new process and its transaction types catering for both GQ and VQ, it also replaces the 'Student Results' file type within Pearson's EDIFACT format, and the Form M 'Results' file type within the City & Guilds' format. A 'new to old' mapping across the different file types can be found later in this document.

In order to improve the quality of data sent to awarding organisations, additional validation has been introduced to ensure that outcomes cannot fall outside the set parameters (eg the grade range or maximum mark), or after set deadlines. Auditing will also be improved in order to provide clarity around any updates sent to awarding organisations.

For some qualifications, the submission of a Centre Assessed Outcome can also automatically trigger an Award Claim when it is received by an awarding organisation (without the need for separate submission of an Award Claim – see below). Award Claims can also be sent with the Centre Assessed Outcomes (to support certification processes such as Fallback Claims).

Note that the moderation sampling process is outside the scope of A2C.

1.2 Award Claims

The submission of vocational Award Claims will also be catered for within A2C. Award Claims can take on different behaviours for different types of qualifications. There are discrete submissions for:

- a Centre Assessed Outcome which also behaves as an Award Claim (see above)
- Centre Assessed Outcomes with an Award Claim
- an Award Claim independent of a Centre Assessed Outcome.

This Award Claims process can relate to the submission of an Award Claim independent of any Centre Assessed Outcome. In this scenario, the learner is likely to have already achieved any units contributing to the overall qualification and will want to claim their overall award.

1.3 Estimated Grades

Note that whilst Estimated Grades cannot be submitted through A2C, the product catalogue will contain information indicating which awarding organisations require them for which qualifications.

2.1 Centre Assessed Outcomes Process Diagram

This process diagram shows the end-to-end business process for Centre Assessed Outcomes and is designed for use with end-users eg examination officers.

[illegible]

2022 Version

2.2 Award Claims Process Diagram

This process diagram shows the end-to-end business process for Award Claims and is designed for use with end-users eg examination officers.

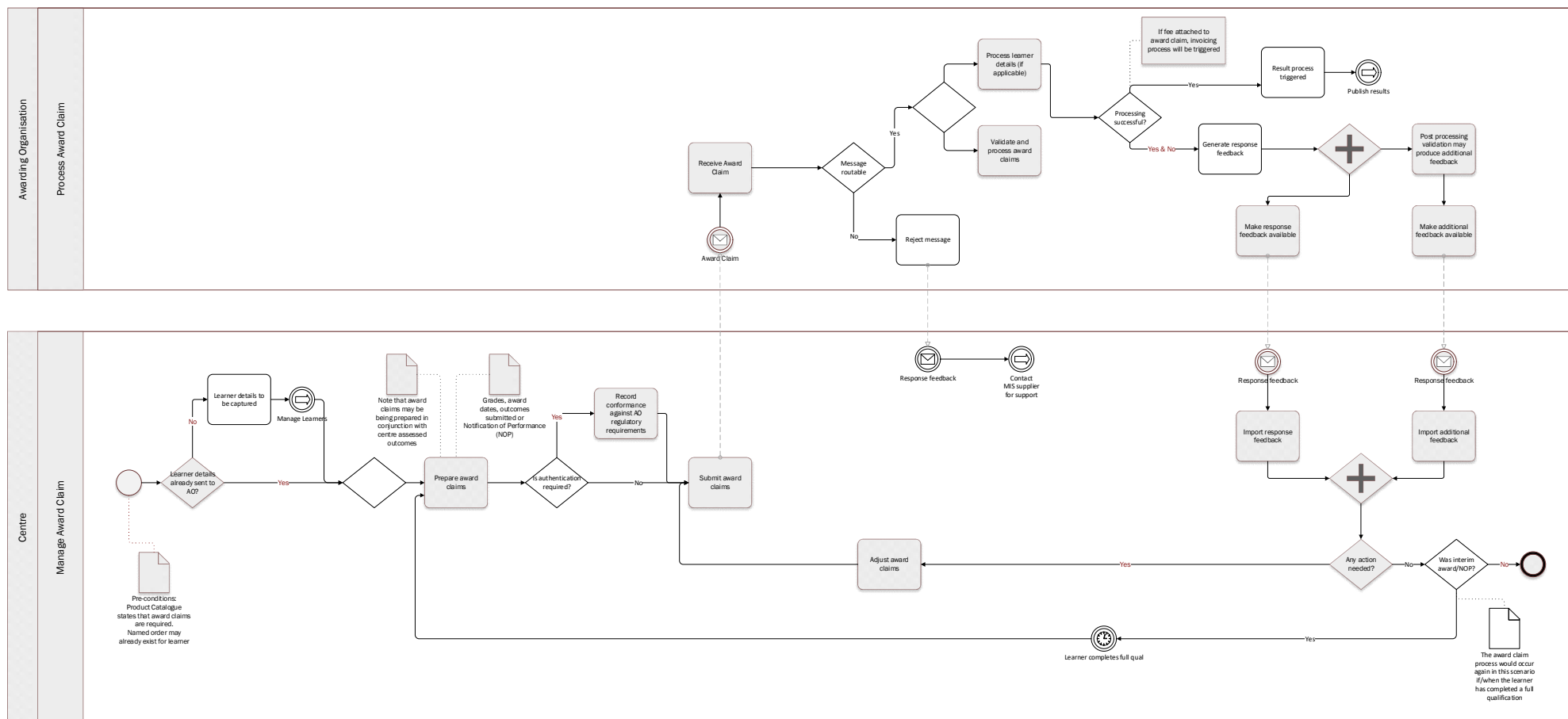


Figure 2 Award Claims Process Diagram

3 User Stories

The user stories listed here provide contextual information about how the business process has been designed.

User Story 1

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As a: | teacher/internal verifier/programme leader |
| I want to: | electronically record Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims for my learners |
| So that: | the examinations officer can submit that information to the awarding organisation on my behalf. |

User Story 2

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | examinations officer |
| I want to: | verify the Centre Assessed Outcomes recorded by the teacher |
| So that: | I can be confident in its accuracy before the data is submitted to the awarding organisation. |

User stories 1 and 2 reflect the two-stage process which exists in many centres, where teaching staff are responsible for recording Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims, and examinations officers are responsible for the verification and subsequent submission of that data to awarding organisations.

User Story 3

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | examinations officer |
| I want to: | submit Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims to an awarding organisation |
| So that: | the awarding organisation has a record of the Outcomes/Award Claims for students at my centre. |

User Story 4

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | awarding organisation |
| I want to: | receive Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims from centres in A2C format |
| So that: | data can be imported in to the awarding organisation's systems. |

User Story 5

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | awarding organisation |
| I want to: | capture and store Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims received from centres |
| So that: | data can be validated. |

User Story 6

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | awarding organisation |
| I want to: | generate feedback for a centre who has submitted Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims |
| So that: | the centre can be informed about the success of, or any issues with, their data. |

User Story 7

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | awarding organisation |
| I want to: | make the feedback generated available to a centre |
| So that: | the centre can import this into their MIS. |

User Story 8

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | examinations officer |
| I want to: | receive feedback from an awarding organisation about the Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims I have submitted |
| So that: | I can be confident about the data held by the awarding organisation and be made aware of any issues with the data that require my attention. |

User Story 9

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | examinations officer |
| I want to: | be able to make updates to previously submitted Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims in response to feedback received from an awarding organisation. |
| So that: | changes can be submitted to the awarding organisation to amend data previously submitted by my centre. |

Where centres have received errors or warnings in their feedback messages, remedial action will be required to address those errors and warnings.

User Story 10

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | examinations officer |
| I want to: | be able to submit additional updates, or new Centre Assessed Outcomes, to an awarding organisation |
| So that: | the awarding organisation can be informed about any changes to the outcomes for learners at my centre. |

Centres are likely to identify amendments or updates which will need to be sent to the appropriate awarding organisation. These could be amendments to data previously sent, or new data which has not previously been submitted. This will be particularly relevant for on-demand qualifications where data is likely to be submitted when learners have achieved an outcome, rather than in line with external deadlines.

User Story 11

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| As an: | examinations officer |
| I want to: | be able to cancel Centre Assessed Outcomes or Award Claims |
| So that: | results are not calculated using incorrect information. |

4 Assumptions

| Centre Assessed Outcomes | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CAO1 | Any fees associated with an outcome submission should be triggered upon processing. |
| CAO2 | Some Award Claims are prepared in conjunction with Centre Assessed Outcomes. |
| CAO3 | Some Award Claims may be interim, and a full Award Claim may be expected at a later date. This makes no difference to the submitted data, but awarding organisations may need to update claims accordingly in their systems. |
| CAO4 | For vocational qualifications some awarding organisations will accept the CAO transaction type <i>in lieu</i> of an order transaction. In those circumstances, learner information must be submitted if it has not been submitted previously. Where the CAO transaction for a vocational qualification is not <i>in lieu</i> of an order (because the order was placed previously), full learner details will not be re-provided. |
| CAO5 | For general qualifications the use of the CAO transaction type will be restricted to the provision of outcomes for previously ordered qualification elements. In those circumstances full learner details will not be provided. |

5 Business Rules

The business rules listed here outline key features and behaviours which must be adhered to by awarding organisations and MIS software suppliers when developing systems and designing in-house business processes. Some of these rules will feature in the compatibility testing of the data and messaging standards.

5.1 Common Business Rules

The common business rules for Centre Assessed Outcomes and Award Claims are the same as for orders. See 5.1 Common Business Rules in Section 4: Order Processes.

5.2 Process-specific Business Rules

The following rules have been identified specifically in relation to the processes for Centre Assessed Outcomes (CAOs) and Award Claims (ACs).

| Rule ID | Process Flow Reference | Party affected | Rule title and description |
|---------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OCE1 | General | AO | CAOs/ACs/EGs requirement specified in product catalogue Where a CAO/AC/EG is required, this must be specified by the awarding organisation in the product catalogue. |
| OCE2 | General | AO | CAOs/ACs/EGs supporting information in product catalogue Where a CAO/AC/EG needs to be submitted, the awarding organisation must include all relevant guidance information in the product catalogue to support centres, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximum mark • outcome type • permitted grade range • submission deadline (for series based) or SLA (for on-demand) • barring date to prevent further submission of data • whether cancellations are allowed (CAOs and ACs only). |
| OCE3 | General | MIS Centre | Alerts re: overdue data Centre users must be alerted by their MIS if CAO/AC/EG data has not been submitted to an awarding organisation by the deadline published in the product catalogue. |
| OCE4 | | | <i>This rule is no longer relevant.</i> |

| Rule ID | Process Flow Reference | Party affected | Rule title and description |
|---------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OCE5 | General | MIS Centre | <p>Amendments to previously submitted CAOs/ACs</p> <p>Where a previously submitted CAO/AC/EG needs to be updated, awarding organisations will require a reason to explain the change. Outcome changes are fully audited within awarding organisations, and this includes CAO and AC submissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre users should select a pre-defined reason (awarding organisations will supply these in the product catalogue) It must not be possible to submit a CAO/AC update without first specifying a reason if one is required by the awarding organisation. |
| OCE6 | General | AO | <p>Cancellation of Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims</p> <p>A2C includes the ability to cancel Centre Assessed Outcomes and Award Claims, however not all awarding organisations will permit cancellations. Where cancellations are not permitted, the awarding organisation must reject the submission with the appropriate feedback messages.</p> |
| OCE7 | CAOs/ACs submitted to awarding organisation | MIS Centre | <p>Pre-submission validation</p> <p>MIS suppliers must ensure it is not possible to submit CAOs/ACs which do not fall within the restrictions set out in the product catalogue eg exceeding maximum marks or submission of a grade B when the permitted grade range is Pass/Merit/Distinction.</p> |
| OCE8 | CAOs/ACs submitted to awarding organisation | AO MIS Centre | <p>Pre-submission authentication requirement</p> <p>Awarding organisations may require centres to formally authenticate outcomes or claims that are to be submitted. Where this is the case, awarding organisations must indicate in the product catalogue that authentication is required and supply an appropriate statement for the centre to accept.</p> <p>Authentication is required per component per centre per series. It does not need to be captured at individual learner outcome or claim level. If outcomes for a component in a series are being sent to the awarding organisation in stages (eg for different teaching groups), the authentication only needs to be completed once.</p> |
| OCE9 | CAOs/ACs submitted to | MIS Centre | <p>Pre-submission authentication</p> <p>Where authentication is required, the declaration must be completed within the MIS by the member of staff</p> |

| Rule ID | Process Flow Reference | Party affected | Rule title and description |
|---------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | awarding organisation | | responsible for authentication of the outcomes/claims being submitted (eg the teacher/Head of Department). This must be reflected in the MIS functionality. |
| OCE10 | CAOs/ACs submitted to awarding organisation | MIS Centre | Sub-component outcomes Where an awarding organisation has specified in the product catalogue that a breakdown of outcomes needs to be submitted, it must not be possible to submit the outcomes to an awarding organisation without that breakdown of marks/grades. Where marks are supplied, validation must occur to ensure that the sum of the sub-component marks does not exceed the maximum for that component. |
| OCE11 | CAOs/ACs submitted to awarding organisation | MIS Centre | Award Claim Date Users must be able to amend the Award Claim date which accompanies a submission. However, they must not be able to set it as a date which occurs further in the future than the actual submission date. |
| OCE12 | CAOs/ACs submitted to awarding organisation | MIS Centre | Partial cohort submission Centre users must not be constrained to submitting all CAOs/ACs for learners in their system in a single submission. It must be possible to submit the information in smaller quantities. |
| OCE13 | General | MIS Centre | Amendments to personal details and identifiers Any amendments to learner's personal details and identifiers which are spotted by centre staff involved in the capture and submission process should be reflected in the MIS and a learner detail update message triggered. |
| OCE14 | CAOs/ACs submitted to awarding organisation | MIS Centre | Validation of CAO/AC submissions against registration time limit Some awarding organisations specify that a registration has an associated time limit. Where this is the case, it must not be possible for data to be submitted if the registration has expired. |
| OCE15 | CAOs/ACs submitted to awarding organisation | MIS Centre AO | Amendments to CAO/AC If (as in OCE2) updates to CAOs/ACs are not permitted, the MIS must prevent updates from being submitted to the awarding organisation. |

6 Service Level Recommendations

These Service Level Recommendations (SLRs) reflect realistic end target dates for all awarding organisations migrating to A2C messages. Awarding organisations aspire to process messages within a shorter time frame. They are subject to UK public holidays and UK standard working days (Monday to Friday).

These SLRs will remain under review by the JCQ^{CIC} during the early years of A2C adoption.

The following SLRs are applicable to this business process:

| Service | Description | Examples |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Data to be submitted by any specified deadline. | Where a deadline is supplied in the product catalogue, centres should submit Centre Assessed Outcomes/Award Claims/ Estimated Grades to the awarding organisation by that deadline. | A229/01 CAO Deadline: 21 May 2012 at 23:59:59 |
| Delivery of acknowledgement messages to centre | A2C transport mechanism will transmit acknowledgement messages immediately to the appropriate centre. | |
| Centre Assessed Outcomes: Awarding organisation message processing and publication of feedback responses. | Process message and make feedback available within two working days of receipt. | |
| Award Claims: Awarding organisation message processing and publication of feedback responses. Note: awarding organisations will have their own service levels for publication of results following the processing of successful Award Claims. | Award claims will be processed and feedback made available within seven calendar days of receipt. | |

7 Transaction Types

This section provides business descriptions and contextual information for each of the transaction types that support this business process.

7.1 Centre-to-Awarding Organisation Transaction Types

Centre Assessed Outcome: A transaction type to submit new and/or updated Centre Assessed Outcomes to an awarding organisation.

Cancel Centre Assessed Outcome: A transaction type to cancel Centre Assessed Outcomes previously submitted to an awarding organisation. This transaction type is only relevant where the CAO has been used *in lieu* of an order, and subsequently requires cancellation. Where submitted CAOs need to be amended, the Centre Assessed Outcome transaction type should be used.

Award Claim: A transaction type to submit new and/or updated Award Claims to an awarding organisation.

Cancel Award Claim: A transaction type to cancel Award Claims previously submitted to an awarding organisation.

7.2 Awarding Organisation-to-Centre Transaction Types

Publish Feedback – Centre Assessed Outcome: The provision of feedback on Centre Assessed Outcome data received by an awarding organisation in a corresponding Centre Assessed Outcome transaction. This transaction type will include data item level feedback.

Publish Feedback – Cancel Centre Assessed Outcome: The provision of feedback on the cancellation of Centre Assessed Outcomes.

Publish Feedback – Award Claim: The provision of feedback on Award Claim data received by an awarding organisation in a corresponding Award Claim transaction. This transaction type will include data item level feedback.

Publish Feedback – Cancel Award Claim: The provision of feedback on the cancellation of Award Claims.

7.3 New to Old Transaction Type Mapping Table

This table provides a mapping from the A2C transaction types described above back to the related file types in the old formats.

| A2C Transaction type | Previous File Type(s) | Additional information |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Centre Assessed Outcome and Award Claim | JCQ – M File (Centre Assessed Outcomes only – Award Claims not supported by JCQ EDI) Pearson EDIFACT – Student Results (RESULT) City & Guilds – Form M | |
| Publish Feedback – Centre Assessed Outcome and Award Claim | n/a | |
| Publish Feedback – Estimated Grade | n/a | |