**Diploma aggregation service (DAS) Closure**

**Questions and Answers**

If your question isn’t covered in the below, please contact the DAS helpdesk.

Email: das.helpdesk@education.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 100 0100

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**Questions from Exams Officers**

**Before the closure of DAS**

1. **I have learners expecting Diplomas in 2014, what do I need to do?**

   Firstly, Diploma Awarding Bodies (DABs) need to know the number of active learners expecting Diplomas in 2013 and it is therefore important that information in DAS is updated.

   Secondly, you need to contact the appropriate DAB about their arrangements for awarding in 2014. Once DAS closes DABs will require information from centres in order to award Diplomas.

   A recent update to the Exams Delivery Support Unit (EDSU) website sets out recommended actions. Not following these steps might mean your learners aren’t awarded their Diplomas in 2014.

2. **I used to have Diploma learners, but don’t currently, what do I need to do?**

   Make sure you have deactivated any learner accounts with the appropriate reason. A recent update to the EDSU website sets out recommended actions.

3. **Will DAS be sending me any pre-closure notifications or deadline dates for actions I need to take prior to closure?**

   The EDSU update sets out the actions you should take before closure. If you have learners expecting Diplomas after closure, your DAB will contact you about further actions they want you to take.

4. **What information can centres provide for learners who do not achieve and/or complete their Diploma by 30 September 2013?**

   A Diploma progress statement (DPS) is available for all learners who have either not been awarded a Diploma, or did not complete all the necessary components for a Diploma up to 23:59 30 September 2013. It is generated.

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1 Exams officers are responsible for managing and administering exams in schools and colleges. This Q&A document will be updated to address questions from other audiences.
from DAS and will list the elements of the Diploma achieved to date. It can be used to provide information, advice, and guidance to learners about their progression. Please note that Diploma progress statements are not available for learners who receive ‘Unclassified’ (U) grades.

Diploma progress statements are only available from DAS, and will therefore be unavailable once DAS has been closed at 23:59 30 September 2013. After this date, a centre will have to liaise with the appropriate CABs and DABs if a learner wants to complete their Diploma.

To access a sample DPS before DAS closes, click on the following link:

For instructions on how to print a DPS, see DAS User Guide for Centres 2011 – Page 60
http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/doc/d/das%20user%20guide%20for%20centres%202011.doc

Summer awarding

5. I have learners expecting Diploma awards this summer. Should I issue Diploma Progress Statements to learners who do not receive their Diploma?

Yes. The Progress Statement will show achievement of Diploma components to date; the student can then identify what they still need to do to achieve their Diploma (which can be awarded until August 2014). Students should provide this to their new centre. Diploma Progress Statements can only be produced from DAS, not by awarding bodies, so need to be issued before DAS closes on 30 September 2013.

6. What happens if there are missing results?

In the first instance the centre should contact the CAB. If that does not resolve the problem it should be referred to Ofqual.

Ofqual will require CABs to put arrangements in place for making Diploma awards until August 2014.

7. How can I find out which qualifications can contribute to a Diploma?

You can find out which qualifications contribute to a Diploma from Ofqual’s Register of Regulated Qualifications.

8. When will centres see final grades in DAS?

Final grades can be seen until 23:59 30 September 2013. Until that date, Centres will have access to Diploma grade information and component qualification results via DAS from midnight on the day before the public release date.
(Public release dates are 15 August 2013 for level 3 and 22 August 2013 for levels 1 and 2).

All Diploma grades (including U grades) will be available to view on the DABs’ secure extranet sites, as well as in the learner account in DAS.

A Diploma progress statement will be available on results day for any learner who does not achieve the necessary standard to claim a Diploma. Please note that Diploma progress statements are not available for learners who receive ‘Unclassified’ (U) grades.

9. **How do centres claim a Diploma if an intention to claim has not been set for a learner?**

Learners will receive a trial grade on results day and can then decide whether to claim the Diploma or try to improve their grade by resitting any components. Note: Some Diploma awarding bodies (DABs) may charge fees when a Diploma award is requested, and some charge at different stages. Centres should check this with their DAB.

If the Diploma grade is wanted, centres should make a manual claim in DAS. See DAS Quick Guide – Page 37

See also DAS User Guide for Centres 2011 – Page 59
http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/doc/d/das%20user%20guide%20for%20centres%202011.doc

Centres will only be able to manage this process while DAS is live. DAS will close at 23:59 30 September 2013, at which point a manual claim on DAS will not be possible.
10. What will happen if I raise an Enquiry about Result for a Diploma component in September 2013 and the outcome is not known before the closure of DAS?

After the closure of DAS, responsibility for Diploma aggregation will transfer to DABs. You will need to contact the relevant DAB, providing details of the qualification and Component awarding body (CAB) that you have raised the enquiry with. The DAB will validate the new result with the CAB and make any required amendments.

11. I’m an exams officer in a school. Some of my Diploma students might not achieve all their components this summer, but will retake them at a college and may achieve their Diploma after the closure of DAS. (a) How will I know when they have achieved their Diploma? (b) How will the CAB know that they are Diploma students? and (c) who is responsible for informing the DAB of the results?

DABs will become responsible for the aggregation of Diploma results after DAS closure. If a student gains component qualifications after September 2013, the new centre should seek information from the DAB. It is the responsibility of the new centre to provide details of the qualification to the DAB, and the responsibility of the DAB to validate that result with the CAB and make the award.

12. How will the closure of DAS affect my workload?

Following the closure of DAS, centres will be responsible for supplying Diploma awarding bodies with any information they require to aggregate and award Diplomas to their students until August 2014.

13. How will I record work experience/PLTS after DAS closure?

Your DAB(s) will tell you how to do this. They may have a ‘Diploma award entry form’ to collect relevant information after closure.

14. Where do I go for help once DAS has closed?

To your DAB(s) – they are responsible for aggregation and awarding.

15. Why can’t I access DAS after 30th September?

The Government is withdrawing any dedicated support for the Diploma that is not available for other qualifications and DAS will close on 30 September 2013. This date was selected because the vast majority of students will have received their summer 2013 Diploma awards by then.
16. What's the process for aggregation once DAS has closed?

This is the responsibility of the DABs, who will contact affected centres. DABs will develop their own systems that meet the aggregation rules and satisfy Ofqual’s requirement to certificate Diploma awards until 31 August 2014.

17. How do I upgrade a learner's Diploma once DAS has closed?

Contact the DAB, who will be able to confirm the actions you need to take.

18. How can students improve their Diploma grade once DAS has closed?

Students would need to re-sit Principal Learning and/or the Project to improve their Diploma grade. If they do this after closure, to improve their grade, you will need to contact the DAB about making a new award. The DAB will need to verify the new result with the appropriate CAB. Centres will have to liaise with the appropriate CAB and DAB to arrange the re-sit.

19. How can I resolve a Unique Learner Number (ULN) mismatch?

Centres, CABs and the Learning Records Service (LRS) will have to work together to resolve the problem. The DfE ULN service will remain available for schools to validate ULNs.

[A ULN is a 10-digit reference number which is used alongside and to access the Personal Learning Record of anyone over the age of 14 involved in UK education or training.]

20. How will I be able to track the latest ULN updates from the LRS post-closure?

The DfE’s ULN service will remain available. Changes to ULNs, along with mergers, will need to be reported to the LRS by the centre. The centre is also responsible for informing CABs and DABs of any ULN changes. More information about the LRS is available here:

Web: http://www.learningrecordsservice.org.uk/

Email: lrssupport@learningrecordsservice.org.uk

Telephone: 0845 602 2589

21. How can I validate Planned Programmes of Study (PPoS), including the Additional and Specialist Learning (ASL) component?

Planned Programmes of Study should be validated before the closure of DAS. After closure, contact your DAB(s), who have to apply the Business Rules of Aggregation which specify the ASL requirement.
22. What will happen to the DAS guidance on the DAS Webpages post-closure?

It will not be available. DABs will put their own arrangements in place.

23. What will happen to the data I’ve previously uploaded to DAS once it closes?

Data for individual Diploma learners will be transferred securely to the DAB with which that learner is/was registered. The DAS system will then be decommissioned, and data and media securely erased or destroyed in line with the extant HMG security policy framework.

Questions from Component and Diploma Awarding Bodies (CABs and DABs)

24. What happens if I don’t have the arrangements in place to award Diplomas after the closure of DAS?

Ofqual require DABs to put appropriate mechanisms in place and DABs are currently finalising these arrangements.

25. What are the Business Rules of Aggregation (BRAG)? What will happen to the BRAG after closure?

These are the rules of combination explaining how components are aggregated to calculate a Diploma grade. DAS service management has sent a copy to all DABs. After DAS closure the DABs will be responsible for ensuring that any Diploma awarded conforms to these rules.

26. Will I receive details of learners’ planned programmes of study (PPoS) after DAS closure?

Following the meeting on 25 January 2013 between the Department and DABs, we have agreed to provide as much information as possible from DAS, including details of the qualifications identified in the PPoS. However, the PPoS may not contain all the additional and specialist learning qualifications that may count towards Diploma aggregation. As part of our support to centres that still have learners expecting awards in 2013 and 2014, the Department will instruct them to update the PPoS before DAS closure.

27. After DAS closure, how can I ensure CABs make results of Diploma components available to me?

Both the Department and Ofqual have written to CABs making them aware of their responsibilities towards DABs after the closure of DAS. The relationship between DABs and CABs will be vital to ensuring learners receive their Diplomas.

28. Following DAS closure, how will I know if a learner has completed their work experience and Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS)?

The data DABs receive after closure will show all the qualifications recorded in the
PPoS and the results that have been posted by CABs. If work experience and PLTS have been recorded as complete, this will also show. If this information has not been recorded on DAS before closure, DABs will have to confirm completion with the centre. Both work experience and PLTS must be recorded as complete before a Diploma can be awarded.

29. What will happen to the DAS guidance posted on the DAS Webpages post closure?

The DAS webpages will be removed on 1 October 2013 and the guidance will then be unavailable. You should download any guidance you require prior to this date.

30. What happens to the data I've uploaded to DAS after closure?

DABs and CABs cannot upload any data to DAS after closure. All data loaded to DAS before closure on 30 September will be transferred to the relevant DAB using the processes agreed with the Department on 25 January.

DAS will then be decommissioned, and data and media securely erased or destroyed in line with the extant HMG security policy framework.

31. How will I get/track the latest updates from Ofqual’s Regulatory IT System (RITS) after the closure of DAS?

Separate arrangements will have to be made with Ofqual if a regular download of qualification data is required from RITS.

32. How will I get/track the latest Unique Learner Number updates from the Learning Records Service (LRS) after closure of DAS?

Separate arrangements will have to be made with the LRS if a regular download of learner data is required. The primary responsibility for updating learner information rests with the centre, so it is essential that DABs make centres aware of this.

33. After DAS closure and the withdrawal of Ofqual’s Diploma regulatory arrangements is there any requirement for CABs to make a result available to a DAB?

Ofqual requires DABs to have arrangements in place to award Diplomas until August 2014. To do this, CABs will need to verify the results of component qualifications as required by DABs.

34. How will CABs know if there are any Diploma learners taking our qualifications after DAS closure?

DABs will contact you about this on the basis of the information they receive from centres.
Questions from Parents

35. Is my child’s Diploma still valuable?

Yes, the Diploma remains a valid qualification even after its withdrawal in August 2014. A number of Principal Learning qualifications, which form the core of the Diploma, have been approved for inclusion in the 2014 and 2015 Key Stage 4 performance tables, meaning that we regard them as of high value.

The value of a Diploma to an individual pupil and to employers remains what it was – this change only affects how awarding organisations undertake awarding.

36. Can I be certain my child will be awarded their Diploma?

DABs are required to make Diploma awards available until August 2014 for students re-sitting component qualifications. DABs will make Diploma awards until this date where the requirements of the Diploma have been met.

Questions from Learners

37. Will my qualification be recognised in the world of work?

Yes, absolutely. Both the Diploma and its component qualifications will be recognised. Many employers were directly involved in the development of Diplomas and place great value on the non-certificated Diploma components such as work experience and PLTS. Employers also recognise and place high value on the skills gained by students in the Functional Skills and Project qualifications.

38. Will my Diploma allow me to get a university place?

Advanced and progression Diplomas will continue to attract UCAS points beyond 2014. Universities will continue to make their own offers based on published tariffs for the Diploma and its components. You can find out more at: http://www.ucas.ac.uk/students/ucas_tariff/factsheet/adip

39. I’m a L1/L2 Diploma student, still to complete my work experience. In line with changes in Government regulations my school has now withdrawn its pre-16 work experience programme. What chance have I got of ever getting my Diploma?

To get a Diploma, your school or college must indicate that you have completed at least 10 days’ work experience. You should discuss this with your school or college.

40. I am a Diploma student and left school/college this summer before achieving all components of my Diploma. I have a Diploma Progress Statement. What should I do now?

You have until August 2014 to obtain a Diploma. You will need to decide if you want to take any of these Diploma components and take advice from your last school/college about how to do this.
**General Questions**

41. **What is a Diploma progress statement (DPS)?**

A DPS will be available from results day onwards for any learner who does not achieve the relevant standard to claim a Diploma.

Centres can download the DPS from the DAS, print it out, and give it to the learner. The statement will show a list of the components of the Diploma that the learner has achieved to date and can be used to provide them with information, advice, and guidance about their progression.

Please note that a DPS is not available for learners who receive ‘Unclassified’ (U) grades.

The DPS will no longer be available once DAS has closed on 30 September 2013. DABs cannot issue a DPS, but centres will have their own records of results and can produce statements for students.

42. **Can a learner improve on their grade after they have claimed and been awarded a Diploma?**

The awarded grade for a Diploma is calculated from the grades for the principal learning and project qualifications. A learner can improve their trial grade or their awarded Diploma grade by re-sitting units from principal learning or their project qualification.

Results for re-sat Principal Learning units and the project/extended project that have been cashed-in with the CAB will be posted to the learner account in the DAS if the ULN was used when the entries were made.

If the learner is hoping to improve an awarded Diploma grade, a fresh claim to the DAB must be made. This re-aggregation and award may incur a fee from the DAB.

Centres can choose to manually re-claim the Diploma or register and set an Intention To Claim (ITC) when the new results are received. If centres want to register or set an ITC for the re-sit, they must use the ‘Resit options’ facility on the learner account in DAS.

In the learner account details screen, click ‘Resit options’ next to required Diploma. They will then be promoted to register and set an ITC, or just to set an ITC for the specified Diploma.

A resit will result in a new Diploma being created on the learner account. The award date on the original Diploma will remain unchanged and the new Diploma will show a new award date once it is awarded by the DAB.

Any interaction with DAS to allow learner grade improvement will only be feasible up to 23:59 30 September 2013. After that date, DAS will close and the ability to re-
aggregate on DAS will be removed permanently. After that time, a centre will have to liaise with the CAB and DAB involved to arrange any re-sits.

http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/doc/d/das%20user%20guide%20for%20centres%202011.doc