

Regulations for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment – Functional Skills

To be used for:

- **NCFE Functional Skills qualifications in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Entry Levels 1,2 and 3 (600/1780/6, 600/1353/9, 600/1148/8)**

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Introduction

This document is designed to assist centres in the correct administration of the controlled assessments of NCFE Functional Skills qualifications.

These regulations do not in any way affect the responsibility of the centre for health, safety and safe working under current legislation and local government by-laws.



Section 1 NCFE controlled assessments

Controlled assessment is a form of internal assessment in which control levels are set for each stage of the assessment process:

- task setting
- task taking
- task marking

Within these control levels, the following parameters and requirements are set:

- assessment requirements
- evidence requirements
- contextualisation of tasks
- duration of assessment
- details of any preparation needed
- required resources (including pre-release materials and source documents)
- required level of supervision
- formal recording templates to be used (where relevant)
- any assessment location/venue requirements.

Details of the specific parameters and requirements for these qualifications are provided within the relevant Qualification Specification and relevant assessment materials, which will be issued when you first register learners.

NCFE's Functional Skills ICT controlled assessments are subject to the following controls:

Task setting: medium control

NCFE's Functional Skills controlled assessments have a medium level of control for task setting, which means that tasks are set by NCFE following the requirements in the qualification and skills criteria.

Task taking: high control

NCFE's Functional Skills controlled assessments have a high level of control and assessments must be undertaken in controlled, supervised conditions.

This means that learners must be formally supervised at all times during their assessments. Preparatory work (where required by the task) may be completed with limited supervision. Details of supervision required will be given in the task instructions where relevant.

Centres must use the controlled assessment tasks set by NCFE, as well as the relevant assessment templates, when assessing learners.



The scenarios provided may be amended to use alternative source materials relevant to learners, for example where a menu is used, centres could replace the given menu with one from a local café or coffee shop. However, the parameters and requirements of the task(s) must not be altered by contextualisation.

If using a context and/or source materials other than those given by NCFE, the materials and any information contained within must be very familiar to the learner and use appropriate language. The tasks must also be approved by NCFE before use with learners. For more information, please contact NCFE's Quality Assurance team.

Assessment documents can only be accessed in The Portal following a booking for a controlled assessment for a registered learner.

Task marking: medium control

NCFE's Functional Skills controlled assessments have a medium level of control for task marking, which means that centres mark the controlled assessment.

Assessments must be marked using the mark schemes provided by NCFE. Assessment decisions will be checked and confirmed by the centre's Internal Quality Assurer, and NCFE's External Quality Assurer.

The Assessor must record each assessment decision and the justification for the decision on the learner front sheet which is included in the assessment pack.

Distribution of assessment materials

Every care will be taken to ensure that the assessment materials are correctly made available. NCFE will not be responsible for any loss that may occur after the materials are downloaded at the centre. NCFE reserves the right to investigate any irregular circumstances regarding the security of assessment materials.

Each pack of assessment materials contains a number of assessment task sets (and their associated mark scheme and source materials, where applicable) which centres must use during learner assessments.

Please note, evidence gathered through activities other than the assessment tasks provided by NCFE will not be valid towards learner achievement.

Conducting assessments

Controlled assessment materials are made available electronically throughout the year; however, the assessments must only be completed at the end of the course (when the learner has completed their learning of the qualification).

To ensure the integrity of the Functional Skills assessments, all assessment tasks, mark schemes and other associated materials must be stored securely until the learners are ready to complete their assessments.

Assessment materials will need to be printed by the centre for use with learners during their assessment.



Returning assessment packs and task replacement

NCFE will create a bank of assessment packs which will be released throughout the year. When new sets are released, previous sets should be destroyed. NCFE will make you aware of which sets to destroy.

The assessment tasks and materials will remain part of the bank and may be re-issued at a later date to be used for learner assessments. Therefore, centres must not hold onto assessment materials once assessments are complete. Centres are responsible for ensuring that assessment materials are stored securely at all times. Each set should be securely destroyed when instructed by NCFE.

Centres are responsible for making sure that they use the assessments from the correct set.

Learner resits

If a learner has failed their assessment, formative feedback should be given. Assessors should ensure that they are aware of areas the learner did not pass and the criteria covered by those areas, to inform the learner's resit.

If a learner is unsuccessful in their assessment, they may resit at any time. NCFE does not stipulate a length of time in between attempts at the assessment, however we recommend that centres allow learners sufficient time to prepare for their resit and improve skills in the subject area where necessary.

Learners must not resit or rework an assessment they have already attempted.

If a learner needs to resit, they will need to book in the Portal for a new assessment paper by the person co-ordinating assessments

Where a learner has taken a resit, NCFE's External Quality Assurer will ask to see the initial attempt at assessment and the subsequent resit(s).

Centres are responsible for maintaining an appropriate archive of learner evidence in line with the centre agreement.

Where a centre is suspected of allowing, or does allow learners to rework or resit an assessment already attempted by that learner, NCFE may declare the assessment void.



Section 2 - Centre responsibilities

Centres are responsible for:

- providing a named person who is responsible for co-ordinating the assessment process
- providing suitable accommodation and equipment for the assessment in line with the controlled conditions as set out in the assessment pack
- informing learners of the date, time and location of the assessment
- providing a suitably trained Assessor and additional supervisor(s) (where required) for each assessment and ensuring they are familiar with the content of these regulations and any other specific regulations for certain qualifications
- providing the Assessor and any supervisors with all resources and documents necessary for the conduct of the assessment, including assessment task sets, source materials, paper for notes or answers, and any other resources required to take the assessment
- maintaining the confidentiality of the assessments at all times
- ensuring that any centre personnel doesn't have the opportunity to read the assessment tasks or learner evidence, unless they're acting as an authorised reader for learners who require reasonable adjustments in line with NCFE's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- ensuring that no assessment is tampered with
- making any application for non-delegated reasonable adjustments for learners within the timescales stipulated in NCFE's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- making the Assessor and any supervisors aware of any reasonable adjustment arrangements agreed for any learners
- taking all reasonable precautions to ensure that only genuine learners sit the assessment
- securely destroying assessment materials once the assessments are over.

Selection and number of Assessors

Learners must be formally supervised during their Functional Skills controlled assessment by an appropriate person. This may be the Tutor or another appropriately qualified member of staff, whose integrity may be relied on. They act for the centre and the centre is responsible for their conduct. NCFE does not accept responsibility for the payment of fees or expenses to staff.

Assessors and supervisors must be appointed by centres and briefed on the requirements for the conduct of controlled assessments.



If the Assessor is the learners' Tutor, mediation and support must not exceed the limits stated in the assessment guidance and materials sent out on registration of learners.

When readers/writers are permitted and provided for learners with reasonable adjustments requirements, an Assessor must also be present. Readers/writers must not also act as Assessors/supervisors.

There are no formal requirements on the number of Assessors/ supervisors that must be present during an assessment, and due to the nature of the Functional Skills controlled assessments, we recommend that learners are assessed in groups of no more than 20 at a time.

When there is only one Assessor, they must be able to summon assistance easily, without leaving the room, in case of emergencies, e.g. if a learner is taken ill. Under no circumstances must learners be left unsupervised or unattended.

Malpractice and Maladministration

NCFE will investigate each case of alleged or actual irregularity committed by a learner, Assessor or other person involved in the conduct of the assessment, in order to establish all of the facts and circumstances surrounding the case.

These investigations will be carried out in accordance with NCFE's Maladministration and Malpractice Policy, available from the NCFE website [ncfe.org.uk](https://www.ncfe.org.uk). or from NCFE's Provider Assurance Team.

Each case will be considered by NCFE on an individual basis in the light of all available information.

Failure to comply with these regulations may result in a centre's approved status being temporarily or permanently removed and/or learners being withdrawn from the qualification.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Learners who require reasonable adjustments or special considerations should discuss their needs with their Tutor, who should refer to our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy and guidance on reasonable adjustments permitted for the Functional Skills qualifications. The policy is available on QualHub.

Applications for non centre-delegated reasonable adjustments or special considerations should be completed using the application form for internal assessments, available on QualHub.

For more information on the access and inclusion arrangements for Functional Skills, please visit the Ofqual website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>



Section 3 Instructions for Assessors/supervisors

The Assessor and any supervisors required play a key role in the quality control of the Functional Skills controlled assessment process and are required to:

- arrive at the assessment location in good time
- ensure that the room is set up in accordance with these regulations
- distribute assessment materials to learners
- ensure that the appropriate information from the assessment pack is read out to learners prior to the assessment
- ensure that learners understand what is required of them during the task
- advise learners to read all instructions carefully
- ensure that learners know how to show their preferred answer, and how to alter their answer if they change their mind
- provide learners with additional paper if required
- be alert and observe learners at all times during the assessment. Assessors/supervisors must not read or carry out any other activities
- ensure that the assessment is supervised continuously
- ensure that the length of time allowed for the assessment does not fall short of the authorised time specified on the assessment materials to the detriment of learners
- ensure that the length of time allowed for the assessment does not exceed the authorised time specified on the assessment materials
- mark on the appropriate document, e.g. front sheet.
- take assessment materials and learner answers/evidence from any learners who leave the assessment location before the specified end of the controlled assessment
- collect in all assessment materials (used and unused) and learner answers/evidence at the end of the controlled assessment
- ensure that each learner's NCFE number is included on each page of their answers/evidence
- ensure learners enter their personal information and controlled assessment reference number (as shown on the front cover of the assessment materials) into the front cover of the assessment materials
- check that the number of completed assessments agrees with the names and number of learners attending the controlled assessment
- complete the appropriate documents and assessment templates



Before the controlled assessment

Once learners are ready to sit a controlled assessment, a declaration in the Portal must be made by the designated person up to 6 weeks beforehand to inform NCFE for monitoring purposes. The controlled assessment material will be made available in The Portal from the point of booking and can be accessed in the 'view controlled assessments' screen and will be available for 6 weeks from the point of booking.

Learners must not resit the same assessment.

Assessors are permitted to read the guidance document supplied with assessment materials for information on resource requirements, duration etc.

All printed controlled assessment materials must be kept in a secure place which is only accessible to the designated person for co-ordinating the controlled assessment process. This will require a safe, non-portable, lockable steel cabinet within a secure room.

The room must also be secure from non-authorized entry, have restricted access and be locked when not occupied by the person responsible for co-ordinating the controlled assessment process.

If the Assessor notices any discrepancies or missing assessment materials, then please contact NCFE's Customer Support team immediately.

The controlled assessment materials must only be accessed by the Assessor when the learners are assembled in the controlled assessment location (room).

The centre must be able to satisfy NCFE of the security of such arrangements, if asked.

NCFE's Customer Support team must be informed immediately if the integrity or security of the controlled assessment materials is put at risk by theft, loss, damage, unauthorised disclosure, fire or any other circumstances.

The controlled assessment materials must be collected from their secure storage on the day of the controlled assessment by an Assessor or another person authorised by the centre. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure safe transit of the controlled assessment materials to the nominated location.

Stationery and any specified items must be made available to learners, and learners must have been informed what they will need, or are allowed to bring, e.g. HB pencil, pen or dictionary.

The controlled assessment location (room)

The controlled assessment must take place in a suitably quiet, undisturbed location, with adequate space, heating, lighting and ventilation.

Only learners due to sit their controlled assessment and the Assessor (and relevant supervisors) responsible for co-ordinating the controlled assessment process should be allowed in the room immediately before, during or after the controlled assessment.

Learners should not be allowed into the room until the Assessor is satisfied that the room is ready and can indicate where each learner should sit.



Seating arrangements must prevent learners from seeing each other's work, intentionally or otherwise, other than when required by a task, e.g. completing work in a group.

Where the controlled assessment comprises practical activities or the use of equipment, eg computers, then an Assistant familiar with the equipment must be present in addition to the Assessor.

Assistants should be available in case of equipment malfunction only and should have no other involvement with the controlled assessment.

If a learner needs to leave the room temporarily during the controlled assessment because they're unwell or needs to go to the toilet, then they must be accompanied by an Assessor/supervisor who must ensure that they do not speak to anyone else, consult any notes, make a telephone call or otherwise breach the security of the controlled assessment whilst they are out of the room.

Emergencies

If an emergency occurs during the controlled assessment, e.g. fire alarm, bomb warning, equipment malfunction etc:

- the controlled assessment room must be evacuated in accordance with the instructions of the appropriate authority
- learners must leave question papers/booklets and learner answer sheets/booklets on their desk in the room
- if the learners have been closely supervised and the Assessor can assure that there has been no breach of controlled assessment security, i.e. learners did not converse with each other or any other person, or consult any other books or notes during the enforced break in the controlled assessment, then the controlled assessment may be resumed and the full remainder of the allotted time may be given
- details of the emergency and the actions taken when the emergency arose must be recorded on the learner front sheet
- if you're unable to resume the controlled assessment, please contact NCFE for further advice
- if the Assessor believes that there has been a breach of assessment security, then the controlled assessment is void.

At the end of the controlled assessment

When the allotted time has ended, learners must be told to stop writing or working.

Learners should be instructed to check that their name, centre number, learner and assessment reference are on all relevant assessment materials, and that any extra sheets of paper used have their names on them and are securely fixed to their work/evidence. If the learner has used paper for notes or workings out this doesn't need to be submitted but must be securely destroyed.



Where computers have been used and a printout is to be submitted, the Assessor should check that each page of the printout can be identified on a learner-by-learner basis. Only one copy should be printed and the files must be erased from the computer immediately.

Assessor must collect all controlled assessment materials before learners leave the room to ensure that no learner accidentally takes their assessment materials or work/evidence with them.

The Assessor should check that learners have entered all their details correctly on the relevant assessment materials.



Section 4 Conduct of the controlled assessment

Assessor/supervisor should read the following statements out and confirm learner understanding:

- Read each task carefully and attempt to answer all tasks.
- Please ensure that your answers are clear and legible.
- Do not turn over your question paper/booklet until I/we instruct you to do so.
- You must not have any notes, books, dictionaries, or other information with you unless it is specifically allowed by the rules of the controlled assessment.
- If you have brought anything into the room, you must hand it to me/us before the assessment begins. Mobile phones and other means of communication are not allowed in the assessment. If you have brought these into the room they must be switched off and passed to me. I'll/we'll give you them back at the end of the assessment.
- Bags, coats and any other belongings should be left at the front of the room.
- You must not work with anyone else. If you have any problems and need to speak to me/us, please raise your hand to attract my/our attention. Do not make a noise or distract other learners.
- By starting the controlled assessment, you are agreeing that you have understood and accepted these rules.



Contact us

NCFE
Q6
Quorum Park
Benton Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE12 8BT

Tel: 0191 239 8000*
Fax: 0191 239 8001
Email: customersupport@ncfe.org.uk
Website: www.ncfe.org.uk

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