

SLC Guidance FAQs

Recording

Is it still a requirement to record an assessment?

Yes – there is a requirement for **one** recording per assessor, per level, per academic session (year).

Guidance

Will there be a new standardisation video produced?

Yes, this will be available soon.

Are you sharing the updated PowerPoint so that we can do development internally with staff?

Yes, this will be shared directly with centres.

Groups

Could you clarify the minimum and maximum number allowed in a group?

A group must consist of at least three and no more than five learners. This includes the audience and the presenter at level 2.

Can you have a mixed group of L1 and L2 learners taking part in one assessment?

Yes, you can have a mixed group of learners as long as no learner is disadvantaged. Where possible, learners should be assessed in groups of the same level.

Timings

Has the requirement for a learner to speak for a certain number of minutes been removed?

The timings are per task, rather than per learner. For example, with a discussion, if learners meet the subject statements and contribute meaningfully, there is no need to time each learner.

Is there is a specific amount of time we need to give for preparing for the assessment?

Preparation time will depend on the group / learner. Learners should be given opportunities to practise the skills prior to assessment. Learners should be given enough time to prepare for assessment, in fitting with the requirements of the task. At level 2, for example, learners may want to carry out research 2 weeks prior to assessment. All learners must be made fully aware of the requirements of assessment before it is scheduled to take place.

How much flexibility is there around time, for example, if a learner goes under or over?

Timings are an approximation only; there is a tolerance of a minute or two either way, depending on the size of the group and at the assessor's discretion.

Will there be more exemplars or are we expected to create our own?

Centres will devise their own tasks based on NCFE guidance or alternatively, can use exemplars provided.

Can we use the same subjects repeatedly as long as learners haven't done that topic before?

This is a possibility, but topics for discussion should be current and relevant; many topics date quickly.

Tracking and documentation

Do centres still need to complete a form and obtain pre-approval for tasks they have devised for the L1 & L2?

It will no longer be necessary to complete a contextualisation request form for the SLC.

How do we notify NCFE that we have chosen our own subject without using the contextualisation form?

There is no longer a need to notify NCFE about chosen topics.

Can we continue to use our approved contextualised assessments following the cut-off date?

Centres can continue to use all assessments booked via the Portal until 6 weeks after the cut-off date for bookings, which is 29 September 2023.

Is the tracking document changing at all?

There is a new tracking document, yes.

What do the changes to SLC mean for learners that have completed Reading and Writing components in 22/23 but will go on to complete SLC in 23/24 post sept?

It means that centres will follow the new SLC guidance and devise their own tasks, using the new paperwork. The English assessments are separate components, so learners who have already completed Reading and Writing prior to September 2023 will be able to complete their SLC and then achieve their certificate.

Has the requirement to get learner comments been removed?

There is no longer a requirement to capture learner comments on the Learner Observation and Assessment Record Form (LOAR). Learners will still need to sign the LOAR to confirm they have received and understood the feedback they have been given.

If an assessor has not completed the LOAR correctly or in enough detail, would it impact the learner? Centres must ensure that assessors are fully standardised and familiar with the documentation requirements for the level(s) they are assessing. EQA feedback to the assessor would not impact the learner.

Tasks

Will the topics need to be verified by EQA before they can be used?

Centres can devise and internally verify their own tasks, but they must comply with the information and guidance provided by NCFE.

How does a 'short talk' (Level 1) differ from a 'presentation' (Level 2)?

The short talk at Level 1 is a step towards the more formal presentation assessed at Level 2. Learners should be taught how to structure a talk with a clear aim.

If a learner has been given a topic (say a week prior to the assessment) for prep time, and then that session is cancelled, can they sit that subject the next month or do they need to be given (and prep for) a new subject?

The learner would not need to choose a new topic.

At Level 2, do all the presentations have to be on the same subject, or can learners choose their own individual topic to present?

If learners choose their own topic, the assessor must ensure it is fit for purpose; the presentation should demonstrate the learner's ability to adapt verbal contributions to suit audience, purpose and medium.

Will there still be generic topics that we can select, or do we need to devise our own based on learner interests?

Yes, generic topics are available in the exemplars in the guidance document. However, assessors can devise their own in line with the guidance.

Do we need to give learners a choice of presentation topics? Currently they have a choice of 5. There is no need to give learners a choice of topics. Assessors might set an overarching topic (for example, a topic relevant to the vocational area) which each learner can personalise, or learners can choose their own topic.

General

Can existing learners who have attempted and failed the existing SLC, still attempt the new SLC when it becomes live?

Yes, they can.

Can learners that are signed up before September complete the new SLC?

Yes, they can.

When do we have to start doing these, please?

There will be a cross over period, but it is expected that the end of September will be the last date for bookings on the old SLC, with a further 6 weeks' allowance after that date to enable centres to finalise any remaining assessments in the previous format.

Will Level 1 and Level 2 assessment dates need to be declared in advance as previously?

There is no need to declare assessment dates in advance with NCFE; however, this may be an internal requirement.

What happens if we devise a topic/question that the EQA later deems not to be at the right level? Will learner have to redo or not be awarded the pass for SLC?

Centres must ensure that assessors are fully standardised and familiar with the requirements for the level(s) they are assessing. EQA assessor feedback would not impact the learner.

Entry level

To confirm for Entry1 - if they do not meet the needs of all aspects in Task 1 or Task 2 - do they need to retake the whole of the task again or just the aspect that has not been achieved?

They do not need to retake the whole task – just the part they need to.