

Diploma Principal Learning

Controlled Assessment Guidance

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This guidance covers the following diploma qualifications:

Currently available:

- Construction and the Built Environment
- Creative and Media
- Engineering
- IT
- Business, Administration and Finance
- Environmental and Land Based Studies
- Hair and Beauty Studies
- Hospitality

Available September 2010:

- Public Services
- Retail Business
- Sport and Active Leisure
- Travel and Tourism
- Society, Health and Development

Available September 2011:

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Languages and International Communication
- Science
- Manufacturing and Product Design

What is Controlled Assessment?

Controlled assessment is the approach to internal assessment where requirements or 'controls' are established for

- setting tasks
- taking tasks
- marking tasks

There are three different levels of control; high, medium and limited.

This document aims to set out in further detail, the AQA-City & Guilds approach and guidance for controlled assessment as applicable to all Principal Learning. For further general guidance on controlled assessment, consortia should also refer to the QCDA document, *Controlled assessment in Diploma Principal Learning: A consortium guide*. This is available in hard copy or to download from www.qcda.gov.uk

This document applies to all currently available Principal Learning and must be read in conjunction with the individual specification.

Task setting (limited control)

AQA-City & Guilds apply **limited control** to task setting across all Principal Learning qualifications. This means that it is the responsibility of consortia to design assessments that are fit for purpose and that cover all the assessment criteria in the unit.

At the stage 1 advisory visit, the moderator will discuss the consortium's plans for controlled assessment, with the Domain Assessor. This will include setting a realistic brief, tasks and evidence and understanding of controls for task taking.

Each unit contains an assessment section which contains instructions on task setting for that unit. Parameters are specified in terms of:

- setting a brief which secures an **applied and sector relevant purpose** for the assessment
- the importance of setting a **coherent assessment** that covers all the assessment criteria / learning outcomes
- **activities** to be undertaken, including the level of demand
- the **evidence** that must be produced.

Applied and sector relevant purpose

The assessment section provides information on the purpose of the assessment which Consortia must adhere to when setting briefs and tasks for assessment. The brief must clearly state to the learner what the purpose of the assessment is and the assessment must provide an outcome that would be meaningful to an employer. It may help to support learner achievement if the brief for the assessment is able to be set in collaboration with an employer.

Coherent assessment

The *weighting of assessment criteria / learning outcomes* table should be referred to when setting tasks, so that appropriate depth and breadth can be allocated to different areas of the assessment.

Reference should also be made to that part of the assessment section of the unit which refers to activities and evidence when setting tasks to ensure that assessment criteria are covered.

Example assessments are provided for all internally assessed units which aim to help Consortia when designing assignments in line with the assessment structure provided by AQA-City & Guilds.

Activities and evidence

Reference is made in the assessment section of the unit to the types of activities that may be set to cover the assessment criteria / learning outcomes. Consortia may devise different tasks provided that they meet the requirements of the unit and add up to an applied, purposeful activity. When setting tasks, Consortia must also specify the controls for task taking in terms of time, resources, collaboration and supervision for each activity.

Learners should be set tasks of equivalent complexity regardless of their expected achievement.

Task taking

Task taking covers the following aspects: time, resources, supervision and collaboration. AQA-City & Guilds will apply either a limited or medium level of control to specific aspects of task taking depending on the unit. The details contained in this section provide general information that applies across all Principal Learning units across all levels. It is the responsibility of the consortium to ensure that internal controlled assessment for Principal Learning is conducted and marked in accordance with the instructions specified by AQA-City & Guilds and the *JCQ 'Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments – 1 September 2009 – 31 August 2010'*. In addition to the specification for the Principal Learning at least one copy of the JCQ instructions must be made available to all subject leaders.

Time (limited control)

The overall time to be spent generating evidence for the assessment is specified in the assessment section of each unit. It is up to individual Consortia to determine the amount of time to be allocated to each activity within the assessment and although you are not required to record time spent on assignments, it is recommended that variations from the allocated time should not normally be by more than plus or minus 10%.

Resources (limited or medium control)

In general, AQA-City & Guilds will apply a limited level of control to resources. This means that Consortia must determine appropriate physical resources and information sources for the assessment. However, for some units, the level of control for resources will be medium where particular requirements for resources are specified.

Consortia must have access to sufficient equipment to ensure that learners have the opportunity to cover all the practical activities. Any requirement for specialised equipment such as access to a 'mock shop', use of the internet, or interaction with simulated or live clients/customers will be found in the assessment section of the relevant unit. All resources used, including sources of information, must be clearly referenced by learners.

Guidance on how this should be done can be found in section 4 of the *JCQ 'Instructions for conducting controlled assessments: 1 September 2009 – 31 August 2010'*.

Collaboration (limited or medium control)

In general, AQA-City & Guilds will apply a limited level of control to collaboration. Limited control for collaboration means that Consortia should determine appropriate opportunities for collaboration during the assessment.

For some units, the level of control applied to collaboration will be medium. This will apply when learners are required to carry out tasks as part of a team and the team-working skills are an integral part of the assessment requirements. In such cases, the information contained in the assessment section will specify the parameters for how the team work should be managed.

Where an assessment is undertaken as a group, for example generating ideas, each learner must write up his/her own account. Even if all candidates have the same information, the description of how the information was obtained and the conclusions drawn from it must be in each learner's own words. Alternatively, learners

may collaborate in the construction of the product or the presentation but their evaluative responses must be their own and their individual contribution clearly identified.

Teachers/assessors assessing a learner's evidence where group work has been undertaken will need to be convinced of its individual authenticity. Questioning can be used in order to clarify the validity, authenticity and sufficiency of evidence and, under these circumstances, the teacher/assessor may wish to include a dated witness statement detailing this evidence. It is expected that the use of such statements will be kept to a minimum so that they constitute a very minor part of the submitted evidence.

Annotation of written/photographic evidence can also be used to detail an individual's contribution.

Where group work/team work is not suitable for the assessment activity, this is stated in each individual unit's assessment section.

Supervision (medium control)

Learners do not need to be under the direct supervision of teaching staff at all times. It is, however, expected that the work submitted for assessment, will be produced or carried out when teaching staff are present. In this way, consortia can be confident that the work submitted is the learner's own and has not been plagiarised in any way.

Learners may work without direct supervision when preparing to undertake controlled assessments. This will include discussing the task or equipment needed with peers and gathering background information. However, if the activity constitutes part of the assessable outcomes, for example, planning with others or generating ideas, then these activities must be supervised.

Supervision is defined by AQA-City & Guilds as normal classroom/studio/workshop conditions where the teacher or assessor is present in the same room whilst learners are producing the evidence for assessment. It is not required that learners work under examination conditions.

The assessment section in each unit specifies the tasks that must be directly supervised in line with the guidance above and those which may be undertaken without direct supervision. On occasion, the requirement for direct supervision may be relaxed if it is not possible to directly supervise the activity required to produce the evidence for assessment. For example, if the most suitable environment for producing the evidence means that the teacher or assessor cannot be present, such as for customer service activities carried out in a work placement, then the teacher or assessor must ensure that an appropriate person supervises the evidence collection. A signed witness statement must be completed with enough information to allow the teacher or assessor to make a reliable judgement about the evidence. An appropriate person is defined as someone who has a supervisory role within the workplace (or equivalent) and who has the required skills. This person must not be a family member.

Evidence produced in the learner's home is not acceptable for assessment, as it cannot be authenticated by the assessor or teacher and a parent or carer is not an appropriate person to supervise.

Task marking (medium control)

Task marking is always subject to medium control. Internal assessments must be marked by the teacher/assessor using the assessment grid in the Principal Learning specification. This will be subject to moderation by a moderator appointed by AQA-City & Guilds.

When assessing learners' work, teachers/assessors should consider the level of attainment demonstrated in four broad areas within the demands and context of the specific unit being assessed:

- depth and breadth of understanding
- level of skills
- level of synthesis, analysis and evaluation
- level of independence and originality.

In the assessment grid for each unit, mark ranges are specified for each assessment criteria topic / learning outcome. The mark ranges apply to the top of each band. When assessing a learner's work, teachers/assessors should use their professional judgement to identify, for each assessment criteria topic / learning outcome, the mark band description the work falls within and then the mark within the range that best describes the depth and quality of the work.

To achieve the higher mark bands, learners should show:

- greater depth and breadth of understanding
- higher level skills
- higher levels of synthesis, analysis and evaluation
- higher levels of independence and originality as required in the assessment criteria.

Work that clearly meets all the requirements of the mark band description should be awarded the maximum mark identified. Aspects of the work that might fall short of meeting, in full, the description but which do not, in the judgement of the teacher/assessor, sufficiently influence the overall level of achievement to merit the work being assigned to a lower mark band, will reduce the mark awarded within the identified range available. This can be expressed as identifying the 'best-fit' approach, where the areas of strength in the work submitted by the learner can be allowed to compensate for weaknesses in other areas. Teachers/assessors should use archived exemplars as they become available as a reference point. By comparing their own learners' work with archive work which has an assessment commentary attached, teachers/assessors will be able to position the work either on a higher or lower point.

Internal standardisation of marking

Internal standardisation of the marking of those units required to be seen by the moderator must be carried out prior to the work being made available to the moderator by post or in advance of the stage 2 visit, whichever is appropriate.

The consortium is required to standardise assessment across teachers/tutors and teaching groups to ensure that the assessment grid has been applied consistently within each unit and that marking has been carried out to similar standards across units. If two or more teachers/tutors are involved in marking units, the domain assessor must be responsible for internal standardisation, which should normally be carried out according to one of the following procedures:

Either a sample of work which has been marked by each teacher is re-marked by the domain assessor who is in charge of internal standardisation;

Or all the teachers responsible for marking a component exchange some marked work (preferably at a meeting led by the domain assessor in charge of internal standardisation) and compare their marking standards.

The domain assessor must ensure that reference and archive materials, such as work from a previous year or examples provided by AQA-City&Guilds, are consulted during the standardisation process.

Authentication

Both the learner and the teacher are required to sign the Candidate Record Form (CRF) to confirm that the work submitted for assessment is the learner's own. The teacher must declare that the work was conducted under the specified controls and record details of any additional assistance.

Other materials can be utilised in controlled assessments for research and reference, but sources of information must be fully acknowledged.

The domain assessor is responsible for ensuring that internally assessed work is conducted in accordance with AQA-City & Guilds instructions contained in this specification and the guidelines contained in the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments. To meet the regulator's Operating Rules for Component and Diploma Awarding Bodies, AQA-City & Guilds requires:

- learners to sign the Candidate Record Form (CRF) confirming the work submitted is their own. For forms completed electronically a typed name is sufficient.
- teachers/assessors to confirm on the CRF that the work assessed is solely that of the learner concerned and was conducted under the conditions laid down by the specification.
- the teacher/assessor responsible for internal standardisation also signs the Centre Declaration Sheet (CDS/PL) to confirm that internal standardisation has taken place and that the work presented is that of the learners named. If only one teacher/tutor has undertaken the marking, that person must sign this form. For each unit, a CRF must be completed for each learner and these, together with the Centre Declaration sheet for Principal Learning, must be sent to the moderator by the specified date with the final marks. Failure to sign either or both the CRF and the CDS/PL may delay the processing of results.

If the teacher/assessor is unable to sign the authentication statement for a particular learner, then the learner's work cannot be accepted for assessment. If, during the external moderation process, there is no evidence that the work has been properly authenticated, AQA-City & Guilds will set the associated mark(s) to zero.

Feedback

The work assessed must be solely that of the learner concerned. Any assistance given to an individual learner which is beyond that given to the group as a whole must be recorded by the teacher on the Candidate Record Form (CRF) and be made available to the moderator upon request.

Whilst feedback may be provided to learners, the consortium must ensure that the work submitted is the learner's own. On occasions, the assessment task will require that learners are given feedback which they must act upon as part of the assessment. This feedback must be recorded and the learner's individual response noted as part of his/her achievement of the task. If feedback is required as part of the assessment, this will be detailed in the assessment section for that unit.

Revision, re-working and interim review of candidates' work

Learners may make amendments to their work in the light of feedback from their teacher provided that this feedback is in line with the requirements of the specification. Learners must not be allowed to make amendments after the work has been submitted for the final assessment by the teacher/assessor.