



Controlled Assessment in GCSEs

Guide for Exams Officers



From September 2009

Contents

1	Changes to GCSEs	3
	• The main changes to GCSEs	3
	• What is Controlled Assessment?	3
	• Timelines	3
	• Key features	3
	• Table of subject requirements	4
2	The process	6
	• Task Setting	6
	• Task Taking	6
	• Task Marking	6
	• Moderation	7
	• Availability of tasks	7
	• Storage of material	7
3	Frequently Asked Questions	8
4	Specimen Controlled Assessment Task	10
5	Glossary of terms	11
6	AQA support	12
7	AQA contacts	12
8	Other sources of information	12

1 Changes to GCSEs

From September 2009, Controlled Assessment replaces coursework for 26 new GCSEs. This is one of the changes in the Government's reform of education for 14–19 year-olds, designed to ensure that specification content meets the aims of the revised secondary curriculum.

The main changes to GCSEs:

- Controlled Assessment replaces coursework
- Modular structure introduced
- Exam papers feature a broad range of question styles
- Functional Skills embedded in GCSEs in English, ICT and Maths
- Recommendations of the Dearing Review of Languages incorporated into GCSEs in Modern Foreign Languages
- Applied and general pathways available with the same qualification where possible and appropriate.

What is Controlled Assessment?

The concept of Controlled Assessment was first introduced in Science GCSEs available for first teaching in 2006. It is designed to assess skills which are not effectively measured by external exams. It retains many features of coursework while ensuring that the work submitted is the students' own and that internal assessments are more manageable for teachers and students.

Whilst the general rules are the same for all the GCSEs, the specific requirements for Controlled Assessment are different for each subject. Information for teachers is provided in the specifications and in our subject-specific guidance leaflets.

Timelines

GCSE subject	First teaching	First awards	First Controlled Assessment entry opportunity
Science	2006	2008	2007
Most other subjects	2009	2010 (short course) 2011 (full course)	2010
English, English Language, English Literature and ICT	2010	2012	2011

Key features

Controlled Assessment:

- enables a more integrated approach to teaching, learning and assessment
- provides an increased facility to ensure that work is the student's own
- enables teachers to choose the timing of the Controlled Assessment
- enables teachers to select from a choice of tasks and contextualise them
- is viewed as part of the work of the course, rather than a separate activity. It is an integral part of teaching and learning
- usually takes place in the classroom, within the normal timetable
- features levels of control designed to maximise reliability and authenticity.

Table of subject requirements

GCSE subject		Controlled Assessment weighting	Unit	Internally assessed	Externally assessed	Task Taking Control Level
Applied Business		60 %	4 & 5 & 6	✓		Medium
Art and Design		60 %	1	✓		Medium
Business and Communication Systems		25 %	10	✓		Medium
Business Studies		25 %	3	✓		Medium
Citizenship Studies		60 %	2 & 4	✓		Medium
Classical Civilisation		25 %	4	✓		Low/High
Dance		60 %	3 & 4	✓		Medium
Design and Technology		60 %	2	✓		Medium
Drama		60 %	2	✓		Medium
Electronics		25 %	2	✓		Medium
Engineering		60 %	2 & 4	✓		Medium
Environmental Science		25 %	2	✓		High
Expressive Arts		60 %	2	✓		Medium
Geography	Spec A	25 %	3	✓		Low/High
	Spec B	25 %	4	✓		Low/High
Health and Social Care		60 %	2 & 4	✓		Medium
History A and B		25 %	3	✓		Low/High
Home Economics	Child Development	60 %	2 & 3	✓		Medium
	Food and Nutrition	60 %	2	✓		Medium
Human Health and Physiology		25 %	2	✓		High
Humanities		25 %	3	✓		Low/High
Leisure and Tourism		60 %	2 & 4	✓		Medium
Media Studies		60 %	2 & 4	✓		Medium
Modern Foreign Languages (Chinese, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Urdu)		60 %	3 (30 %)	✓		Medium
			4 (30 %)		✓	High
Music		60 %	3 & 4	✓	✓	Medium
Performing Arts		60 %	1 & 3	✓		Medium
Physical Education		60 %	4 & 6	✓		Medium
Statistics		25 %	2	✓		Low/High



Subjects with *no* current Controlled Assessment – but where Controlled Assessment will be introduced in the future

English

English Language

English Literature

ICT

Science

Subjects with *no* Controlled Assessment: external assessment only

Economics

General Studies

Law

Mathematics

Modern Foreign Languages

Bengali

Modern Hebrew

Panjabi

Polish

Psychology

Religious Studies

Sociology

2 The process

The process has three stages:

- Task Setting
- Task Taking
- Task Marking.

Each stage has a level of control (or supervision) – *high, medium or low*.

Task Setting

Tasks are set either by the awarding body (High Control) or by the centre (Medium Control) and, in both cases, must be developed according to the requirements of the specification. In some subjects, teachers may adapt tasks provided by AQA to suit the needs and interests of their students. Centres should check individual specifications for details on specific subjects.

The tasks will take many different forms and may involve a variety of evidence including written work, photographs, artefacts, DVDs and audio recordings.

Task Taking

This is:

- how students carry out the tasks
- the conditions under which assessment takes place.

Three levels of control apply to Task Taking:

Low Control – students can work unsupervised outside the classroom. This is normally the research stage.

Medium Control – students work under informal supervision. This is normally the analysis stage.

High Control – students complete their task under direct supervision throughout. This is the write-up stage.

The different stages of the task, the level of control, guidance on time limits and word limits are given in the relevant subject specification. Guidance on access to permitted resources is also provided.

In many ways, preparation for Controlled Assessment will be the same as for coursework. Teachers may support and guide students throughout according to



the level of control ascribed to the relevant stage of the process. For High Control tasks no guidance is allowed.

Each student should have a research diary/folder where they record the guidance and feedback received from their teacher. The diary is also a record of the research and planning stage containing notes, diagrams, essay plans and a bibliography. Students are allowed access to their diary during the High Control write-up stage.

Task Marking

Task Marking has either a High or Medium Control level. High Control means that the awarding body marks the task. Medium Control is where work is assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the awarding body in the same way as coursework. In this case, centres must standardise marking to ensure that all candidates have been marked to the same standard, in line with specification requirements.

Moderation

Moderation aims to bring the marking of internally-assessed work in all centres to an agreed standard. The usual procedure is postal moderation where the centre submits a sample of work to the moderator. Details of the marks awarded by subject teachers, together with authentication of the work submitted, are sent to the awarding body. You must keep all candidates' work securely and make it available on request.

Availability of tasks

We provide tasks for each subject via e-AQA and intend to issue printed copies at teachers' meetings. Tasks will be issued so that teachers have ample time for planning, resourcing and teaching.

We will normally release tasks on e-AQA in the summer term before the start of teaching in September. Teachers need to ensure that they use the correct task for the year of submission. Some tasks only have a one-year shelf life and tasks will be renewed periodically. The year of submission is clearly given on the front cover of all published tasks.

Tasks are available on e-AQA, our secure website for teachers and Exams Officers. Simply log on, go to e-AQA Services, click on Recent Exam Materials and choose your specification. Our subject teams can give further advice.

Material storage

You must securely store all assessment materials, either in a locked cabinet or, if appropriate, a locked classroom or workshop. Work produced over several sessions must be collected and stored securely at the end of each session.



3 Frequently Asked Questions

Is Controlled Assessment like coursework?

It is similar to coursework in many ways. It enables students to produce extended personal responses to an area of the specification.

When can students do their Controlled Assessment?

Teachers can decide when it is appropriate within a period specified by us.

What are the submission deadlines?

The standard deadline for the June series is 7th May, the same date currently used for coursework.

When are the tasks available to centres?

We generally publish them a year in advance, normally in the summer term. Teachers must ensure they use the correct task for the year of submission and that students do not have access to the tasks before the specified period.

How are the tasks issued to centres?

We will publish them in the Recent Exam Materials area of e-AQA and may also provide printed copies at teachers' meetings.

How should centres store work?

Throughout the assessment period you should ensure that all assessment materials are stored securely in a locked cabinet/cupboard, or for some practical subjects, in a locked classroom/workshop.

How should centres store work produced electronically?

This must be saved securely to ensure it can't be amended between sessions. Memory sticks etc should be collected in after each session.

Does secure storage mean the centre's main exam material storage cupboard?

Not necessarily; subject staff may store the material in their departments.

In Task Taking, what does 'High Control' mean?

It means formal supervision whereby students are in direct sight of the teacher/supervisor at all times. The use of resources is tightly prescribed and students must not communicate with each other. Neither can students be given any assistance.

Does High Control (or formal supervision) mean accommodating all students together in an exam hall?

Usually assessments take place in normal teaching rooms. You may choose to accommodate all candidates in a larger venue if this is more convenient. Exam conditions, the use of external invigilators and JCQ notices, however, are **not** required.

How are entries made?

You make entries in the normal way, using the specified entry code and according to the series in which Controlled Assessments are available

What is the role of the teacher/supervisor during formal supervision?

The supervisor must be fully aware of the Task Taking conditions allowed, the regulations relating to materials that candidates may or may not use and be able to confirm the identity of the candidates.

Do centres need to inform AQA when the assessments will be taking place?

No, but we advise that you have a record of the dates and times, the name of the supervisor and any incidents that occur during the course of the assessment.



How should candidates' work be presented?

Work may be handwritten, in black ink, or word processed. In some cases, work may include printouts, charts, artefacts, videos or recordings.

Is work authenticated in the same way as coursework?

Yes, each candidate must sign a declaration to confirm that the work is their own and that any assistance and/or sources have been acknowledged. Teachers/assessors must sign the declaration of authentication and confirm that the work was completed under the required conditions (a declaration of authentication form has been produced by JCQ).

Is the work marked by teachers/assessors?

Like coursework, Controlled Assessments are normally assessed internally and subsequently moderated by ourselves. In some cases of High Control Task Marking, the work is marked by us (eg MFL writing).

Can students re-sit Controlled Assessments?

Yes students can re-sit in the next series available in that subject. See our *Entry Procedures and Codes* booklet for more information.

Do access arrangements apply to Controlled Assessment?

Yes, reasonable adjustments can apply where candidates are eligible. See the JCQ booklet *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration* for further information.

What happens if a student is absent?

Teachers should be able to accommodate occasional absences by giving students the chance to make up the time later. In cases of longer absences, you should contact us to see whether special consideration can be given.

How should centres organise Controlled Assessments for all the different subjects?

You will need, at centre level, to plan when and how the assessments will take place, depending on your accommodation and other resources.

Does moderation work in the same way as for coursework?

Yes, the normal procedure is postal moderation where the centre submits a sample of work to the moderator.

Are there any common awarding body rules for Controlled Assessment?

Yes, see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting Controlled Assessment 1 September 2009 – 31 August 2010*.

4 Specimen Controlled Assessment Task



General Certificate of Secondary Education
Specimen

History (SPECIFICATION A) 4042
History (SPECIFICATION A) (SHORT COURSE) 4041
Schools History Project
Unit 3
Historical Enquiry

Controlled Assessment Tasks

1. With reference to the site you have studied explain why it was situated where it is? (8 marks)
2. Consider the interpretation of the site with which you have been provided. To what extent does your study of the site suggest it is a valid interpretation? (12 marks)
3. How useful is the site you have studied compared with other sources of information, in understanding its functions and distinctive features? Explain your answer. (20 marks)

5 Glossary of terms

Assessment Criteria

Whereby evidence of students' attainment is measured against published assessment criteria eg, Mark Schemes.

Authentication

Confirmation that work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own.

Controlled Assessment Tasks

Tasks or assignments set either by the awarding body or the centre to assess subject-related skills, with defined control levels for each stage. Controlled Assessment Tasks replace coursework in the new GCSEs and the majority are internally assessed.

External assessment

Tasks set or defined by the awarding body, taken under specified conditions and assessed by the awarding body.

External moderation

The process by which internal assessment is monitored by an awarding body to ensure that marking is consistent and in line with required standards.

Internal standardisation

The process to ensure that teachers within a centre (or consortium) apply the same standards in assessing their candidates' work.

Mark Scheme

A document giving details of how credit is to be given to answers for a particular task or unit. It includes acceptable answers or levels of response and the number of marks available for each question/task.

Research Diary/Folder

A diary or folder in which students record their research, planning, resources and feedback from their teachers in relation to the Controlled Assessments.

Secure storage

A locked cabinet/cupboard in which Controlled Assessment materials (including Mark Schemes and students' work) must be kept.

Source referencing

Students must acknowledge the sources from which they have accessed information whilst undertaking the Controlled Assessment. This must include detailed references (web page, author, page numbers etc) of any source material.

Supervision

- **Limited (Low Control)**

Students can work unsupervised and outside the classroom (usually in the research stage).

- **Informal (Medium Control)**

Students do not have to be directly supervised at all times but the supervisor must ensure that work can be authenticated as the candidates' own.

- **Formal (High Control)**

Students work in a supervised, classroom environment and must be under direct supervision at all times.

Task Marking

The tasks are marked/assessed either by the teacher or the awarding body according to published Mark Schemes or assessment criteria.

Task Setting

Specifying the assessment requirements. Tasks may be set by the awarding body or by the centre, according to the subject requirements.

Task Taking

This sets out the conditions under which the assessment takes place and includes the permitted level of supervision, access to resources and interaction with others.

Unit

The smallest part of a qualification for which results can be issued. A unit may contain separately assessed components.

Weighting

The contribution that a unit/component makes to the overall assessment (usually measured in a percentage).

6 AQA support

AQA is renowned for the range and quality of support it provides to both teachers and Exams Officers. The following items and services are available to support you and your colleagues in managing the new Controlled Assessment process:

- a general Controlled Assessment guidance leaflet
- subject-specific Controlled Assessment leaflets
- information and guidance from our subject teams
- guidance and support for Exams Officers from our Senior Regional Support Managers
- help for Exams Officers from our Exams Office Support Contact Centre
- the services of Controlled Assessment Advisers
- support meetings for teachers
- Standardisation meetings
- our Ask AQA service
- dedicated webpages (aqa.org.uk/controlled-assessment).

7 AQA contacts

Exams Office Support:

Tel: **0870 410 1036**

eos@aca.org.uk

Subject team contact details are available from:

aqa.org.uk/controlled-assessment-leaflets

Senior Regional Support Managers:

Wendy Bell – South-West, Channel Islands and Mid and South Wales

Tel: **01483 477 610**

regionalsupport-b@aca.org.uk

Lorraine Cummins – North-West, West Midlands, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and North Wales

Tel: **0161 957 3374**

regionalsupport-m@aca.org.uk

Jenny Johnston – North-East, Cumbria, Scotland and London Boroughs

Tel: **01423 534 318**

regionalsupport-n@aca.org.uk

Steve Payne – South-East and East Anglia

Tel: **01483 477 842**

regionalsupport-g@aca.org.uk

Phil Pryor – Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands

Tel: **01423 534 319**

regionalsupport-h@aca.org.uk

8 Other sources of information

JCQ Instructions for conducting controlled assessments (www.jcq.org.uk)

www.qcda.gov.uk/15976.aspx

www.qcda.gov.uk/15718.aspx

www.ofqual.gov.uk/2004.aspx

www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19