



Controlled Assessment in GCSE

... Are you ready?

Subjects covered:

Applied Business
Art and Design
Business and Communication Systems
Business Studies
Citizenship
Classical Civilisation
Dance
Design and Technology
Drama
Electronics
Engineering
English
English Language
English Literature
Environmental Science

Expressive Arts
Geography A and B
Health and Social Care
Home Economics
History A and B
Human Health and Physiology
Humanities
ICT
Leisure and Tourism
Media Studies
Modern Foreign Languages
Music
Performing Arts
Physical Education
Sciences (new specifications from 2011)
Statistics.

Controlled Assessment – the basics

We've always supported centres to deliver coursework and will provide even more support and advice for Controlled Assessment. We know the rules and requirements for Controlled Assessment are different for each subject, so our advice is subject-specific and focuses directly on what you, as a subject teacher, need to know. The back page of this leaflet shows what's available now and in the future.

What is Controlled Assessment?

It is a form of internal assessment where the control levels for each assessment stage (task setting, task taking and task marking) have been defined by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) for all awarding bodies.

What is the Controlled Assessment process?

There are three stages to Controlled Assessment:

- task setting
- task taking
- task marking.

Each stage has a level of control (high, medium or low) to ensure reliability and authenticity and to make assessments more manageable for teachers and students.

Each stage has a level of control (high, medium or low) to ensure reliability and authenticity



Controlled Assessment – the basics

Task setting

Task setting outlines:

- who will set the task eg awarding body and/or teachers
- what students have to do.

Teacher-set tasks must be developed in line with awarding body requirements. Here are some control examples:

High Control – the awarding body sets the task

Medium Control – teachers can set the task with guidance from the awarding body.

Task taking

Task taking outlines how students go about taking the task and can be split into stages eg Research, Analysis and Write-up. Each stage can have different controls eg:

Research

Low Control – students can work unsupervised outside the classroom

Analysis

Medium Control – students do their analysis and selection under informal supervision

Write-up

High Control – students write up their task in a supervised, classroom environment.

Task marking

Task marking outlines who will do the marking eg awarding bodies and/or teachers. Here are some control examples:

High Control – the awarding body does the marking

Medium Control – work is assessed by teachers and moderated by the awarding body.

Which courses/levels does it affect?

All GCSE Specifications with an internal assessment component:

- Applied Business
- Art and Design
- Business and Communication Systems
- Business Studies
- Citizenship
- Classical Civilisation
- Dance
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Electronics
- Engineering
- English
- English Language
- English Literature
- Environmental Science
- Expressive Arts
- Geography A and B
- Health and Social Care
- Home Economics
- History A and B
- Human Health and Physiology
- Humanities
- ICT
- Leisure and Tourism
- Media Studies
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Music
- Performing Arts
- Physical Education
- Sciences (new specifications from 2011)
- Statistics.

It also affects Principal Learning in the Diploma.

How do I prepare my students for Controlled Assessment?

In many ways your preparation will be the same as for coursework.

Like coursework, Controlled Assessment allows students to produce an extended personal response to an area of the Specification.

The requirements for each subject are different and the Specifications give more detail about what preparation is required and appropriate.

Generally teachers will need to:

- teach an overview of the chosen topic/task before students set to work
- give students the context they need to understand the topic
- teach students any skills they will need for their tasks, such as research skills
- support and guide students throughout the research, drafting and write-up stages.



Managing Controlled Assessment



Issue of tasks

When will the tasks be issued to centres?

There will not be a common publication date. We will publish a list of Controlled Assessment issue dates for all subjects. Generally, the tasks will be issued a year in advance to allow time for planning, resourcing and teaching. In some subjects, eg where tasks only have a one year shelf-life, we will issue a number of years' tasks at the same time. Teachers must ensure they use the correct task for the year of submission. Students should not have access to the tasks in advance of the specified period.

How will the tasks be issued to centres?

They will be issued via our secure extranet, e-AQA.

Controls and deadlines

What does formal supervision (high level of control) actually mean?

- Students must be in direct sight of the supervisor at all times.
- The use of resources is tightly prescribed, normally only research folders/diaries.
- Students must complete all work independently.
- Students must not communicate with each other.
- No assistance can be given to students.

What does informal supervision (medium level of control) actually mean?

- Students do not have to be directly supervised at all times but there must be adequate supervision to ensure that work can be authenticated.
- Teachers must ensure that:
 - the students' work is their own
 - plagiarism does not take place
 - the contributions of individual students are recorded accurately.
- Students have access to resources.
- Students can work together.
- Students can receive limited teacher guidance.

Controlled Assessment allows students to produce an extended personal response to an area of the Specification

Managing Controlled Assessment



Regular monitoring should be undertaken so that the work is seen at each developmental stage

What does limited supervision (low level of control) actually mean?

- Some work can be completed without supervision, outside the classroom/centre.
- Students have access to resources.
- Students can work together.
- Students can receive guidance from teachers.

What are the deadlines for submission of Controlled Assessment tasks?

The standard deadline for the June series is 7 May, the same as for coursework now. For some Specifications a later deadline of 31 May will apply.

Does writing in MFL, which is externally assessed, have a different deadline?

No.

Are there any penalties incurred for work which is too long?

No. Some Specifications have word limits as well as time limits but these are for guidance only. There is no penalty for exceeding word limits unless the assessment criteria requires that the work is focussed and concise.

How should centres store work securely?

Throughout the assessment period, all assessment materials (including mark schemes and student work) must be stored securely, usually in a locked cabinet/cupboard. Work produced over several sessions must be collected at the end of each session and stored securely, including, if appropriate, research folders/diaries. Work produced electronically must be saved securely to ensure it can't be amended between sessions. Work stored on memory sticks etc should also be collected in after each session.

In some cases, eg where students are producing artefacts in Design and Technology or artwork in Art and Design, the locked classroom, studio or workshop will count as secure storage.

Where Specifications allow limited control, how can centres sign up to verify that time controls have been met, since they cannot monitor the amount of time that students spend?

Time allowances are for guidance only and students can't be prevented from spending more time if they wish.

Where Specifications allow limited control, how can centres authenticate work that has not been directly supervised?

Teachers should be aware of planned student activities. Authentication of off site work can be achieved by monitoring each student's research diary/plan of action. Regular monitoring should be undertaken so that the work is seen at each developmental stage.



In some cases the locked classroom, studio or workshop will count as secure storage

Managing Controlled Assessment

Can I give advice and feedback to students?

This depends on the level of control for the relevant stage of the assessment.

During the research, planning and preparation stage (limited control) you may give unlimited feedback and guidance to individual students.

For subjects with medium control/informal supervision, you can provide limited guidance to students. Students are free to revise and redraft a piece of work before submitting the final piece. You can review student work and provide oral and written advice at a general level. The advice can be used to evaluate progress to date and propose broad approaches for improvement.

You must not:

- provide detailed/specific advice on how to improve drafts to meet assessment criteria
- give detailed feedback on errors/omissions
- indicate how specific improvements to presentation or content can be made. Model answers and writing frames are not permitted.

During high control and formal supervision, no guidance is permitted. You may answer questions but cannot advise students how to approach the task. Whilst students are engaged in tasks, you should not:

- answer questions about the meanings of terms or interpretations of findings
- give guidance about how to write conclusions and evaluations.

In all cases, any feedback given should be recorded. Support or feedback given to individual students which has not been provided to the class as a whole must be clearly recorded on the candidate record form.

How should contact between teacher and student be recorded and monitored?

Each student should have a research diary/folder in which to record their research, planning, resources etc. This diary should also record teacher feedback to students.

What is a research diary/folder?

- It is a record of the research and planning phase of the Controlled Assessment.
- It provides evidence that each student's final assignment is their own work and that the ideas are their own.
- It should contain a note of all the sources used eg books, websites, DVDs etc (bibliography).
- It may contain notes, quotations, diagrams and sketches.
- It should record all feedback given to students and participation in any group work.
- It may contain an essay plan but should not contain any lengthy passages of prose that can be copied out in the final assessment.

Resources allowed

In high level control sessions, are students ever allowed access to the Internet, e-mail or memory sticks?

No. This rule is stated in Specifications.

What reference materials will I be able to provide?

This will vary according to subject. For subjects with low and medium control, students may have unlimited access to any print and electronic resources that are available to and within centres. During high control write-up sessions, the use of resources is tightly prescribed. Teachers should refer to the relevant Specification for further guidance.

Can I give students a copy of the marking criteria?

Yes. Students should be aware of the assessment criteria. They can then understand how their work will be assessed and what they need to do to get high marks. It is also perfectly acceptable for teachers to produce a simplified 'student friendly' version.

What materials can students take into the room when they write their assignment?

During high control write-up sessions, students will normally have access to research folders/diaries only, but the requirements may be different across subjects. Teachers should refer to the relevant Specification for further guidance.



Re-sit rules

In subjects where tasks are replaced every year and the awarding body has availability in January and June, may a student who re-sits in June make another attempt at the same task which s/he submitted in January?

Yes.

In subjects where tasks are not replaced every year, may a student who re-sits make another attempt at the same task which s/he submitted previously?

Yes.

Can a student who feels that s/he has under-performed in their initial attempt make another attempt at the same task (ie before submission to the awarding body)?

A student is not allowed to make another attempt at the same task, although the student may attempt a different task if the centre is willing to supervise it.

Each student should have a research diary/folder in which to record their research, planning, resources etc

Management of group work for research – how is work apportioned to individual students?

Students can collaborate when undertaking research. Their work can be informed by working with others but ultimately each student has to produce an individual response. Where work is undertaken within a group, eg fieldwork, each student must indicate where they have made a contribution to the investigation or have demonstrated initiative.

What happens if I need to split the 'Analysis and Evaluation' phase into two or three shorter sessions?

The time allowed for this phase does not have to be continuous, ie it can take place over several sessions/lessons. Teachers can have the flexibility to find what suits them and we fully expect that most centres will split this phase into several shorter sessions.

Other issues



How is students' work authenticated?

All students must confirm that the work they submit for assessment is their own by signing the Candidate Record Form (CRF). A completed CRF will be required for each student. Teachers must also confirm by signing the declaration of authenticity that the work is solely that of the student concerned and that it was completed under the required conditions. If a teacher cannot do this, the work should not be accepted for assessment. Centres should record marks of zero if the authenticity of students' work cannot be confirmed. Failure to sign the authentication statement may delay the processing of the students' results.

For work not completed under direct supervision, teachers should be sufficiently aware of the student's general standard to know if the work submitted is beyond their talents. If teachers have reservations, they should follow the guidance below.

- If you believe that a student has received additional assistance and this is acceptable within the guidelines for the relevant Specification, you should award a mark which represents the student's unaided achievement. You should sign the authentication statement and give relevant information.
- If you feel unable to sign the authentication statement in respect of a particular student, then the student's work cannot be accepted for assessment. You should record a mark of zero for that piece of work.
- If you are concerned about malpractice, you should consult your exams office for advice. Guidance is provided in the JCQ booklet 'Instructions for conducting controlled assessments' together with Form JCQ/M1. Copies of the booklet and form can be found at jcq.org.uk

What happens if students move centres during the course?

It may be possible to help candidates who move from one centre to another during the course. Possible solutions depend on the stage at which the move takes place. If the move occurs early in the course, the new centre should take responsibility for Controlled Assessment work. If it occurs late in the course, it may be possible to arrange for the moderator to assess the work through the 'Educated Elsewhere' procedure. Centres should contact us at the earliest possible stage for advice about appropriate arrangements in individual cases.

Will students requiring reasonable adjustments be given the same access arrangements eg extra time as before?

We can make arrangements so that candidates requiring reasonable adjustments can be assessed. These arrangements must be made before the exam. For example, we can produce a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment. Further advice can be obtained from the JCQ booklet 'Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration General and Vocational Qualifications'.

How can excluded pupils and those who cannot attend school for whatever reason do fieldwork?

Candidates who are excluded from mainstream schooling, for whatever reason, can sometimes still do Controlled Assessments, provided suitable arrangements for supervision, authentication etc can be made. Contact us as soon as possible.

What happens if a student is absent for all or part of their assessment?

Teachers should be able to accommodate the occasional absence by giving students an opportunity to make up the time later. For longer absences, centres should contact us to see whether special consideration can be given. Unless instructed otherwise, teachers must only mark what students produce.

Do the same rules for 'special consideration' apply to Controlled Assessment as to exams?

The rules are not the same in all cases but broadly candidates who were eligible for special consideration when doing coursework will be eligible when doing Controlled Assessments.

Some centres will have better access to IT, will this affect Controlled Assessments?

It has always been the case that centres have differing resources and this situation is not made better or worse by the introduction of Controlled Assessments.

What happens if a school or student submits the wrong task for the series (ie one which is out of date or applicable to a future series)?

The centre should apply for special consideration to see if the task can be accepted and the marks for the wrong task allowed to stand. We will do all we can to protect candidates' interests but, in some cases, it might not be possible to accept work based on incorrect tasks. Centres should therefore take very great care to ensure they give candidates the correct task for the series in which they are going to be entered for awards.



We can make arrangements so that candidates requiring reasonable adjustments can be assessed



How is students' work authenticated?

We're here to help

We provide centres with practical advice and support for Controlled Assessment.

- **Controlled Assessment guidance** is available at aqa.org.uk/controlled-assessment. Guidance is also given in the specifications.
- **Phone support** is available from dedicated subject teams, not call centres, that you can contact directly.
- **Teacher Standardising meetings** will give you further opportunities to hear more and quiz the experts.
- **Ask AQA** gives online support. Just key in your question and we'll reply.
- **Controlled Assessment Advisers** are in place to answer your queries. They work in much the same way as Coursework Advisers and will be allocated to centres.
- **Preparing to Teach meetings** for new Specifications.

You can see that we're committed to providing full support to teachers to help them get ready for Controlled Assessment. We're running face-to-face meetings, our expert subject teams are at the end of a phone and our online support is second to none. What's more, **it's all free to all AQA centres**. No wonder, in an Ofqual survey on exam boards, teachers voted us the best provider of support during the 2008 exam period. So you can count on us for excellent support with Controlled Assessment too.

If you're not with AQA but want to find out more, visit aqa.org.uk. You'll find everything here from Specifications to teacher resource materials, summaries and more. There's also news of other innovations to help you deliver your course and improve performance.

