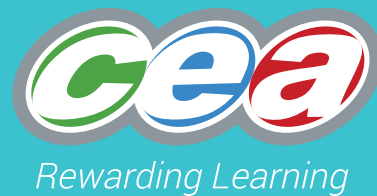# GCSE

Revised GCSE
Teacher Guidance
Digital Technology

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT

For first teaching from September 2017

Foreword

Dear Colleagues

As I'm sure you are aware, Controlled Assessment is the approach used to deliver internally assessed units in a range of subjects at GCSE level.

Informed by the **CCEA Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments**, this Teacher Guidance Booklet accompanies the CCEA GCSE Digital Technology specification and is intended to provide you with advice and support in the delivery of the following units:

• Unit 3: Digital Authoring Practice
• Unit 5: Digital Development Practice

I hope you find the information contained within this booklet very useful as you set out to prepare your students to undertake their Controlled Assessments. However, if you do have any further questions or queries relating to the information contained, please do not hesitate to contact me.
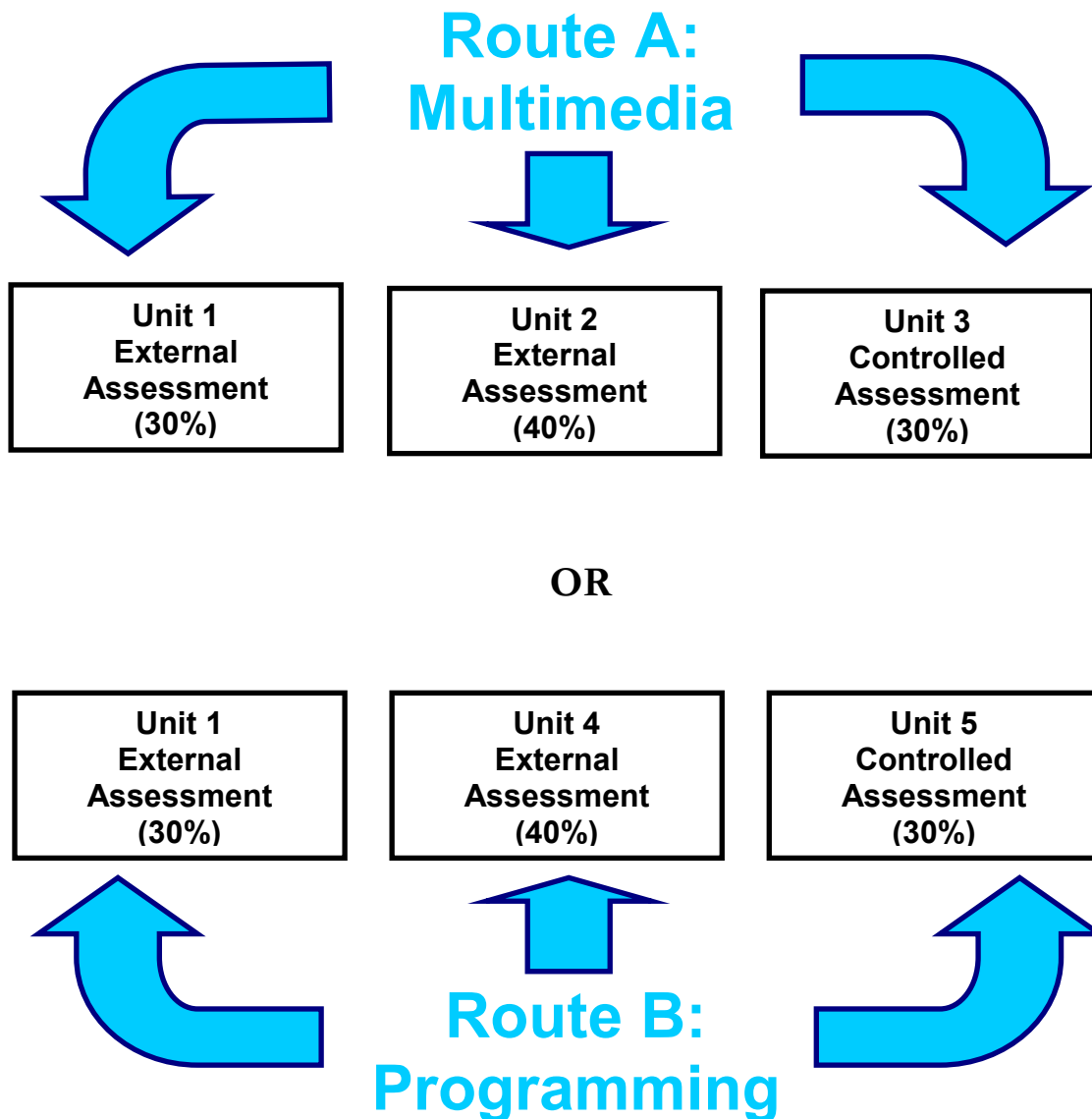
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An Introduction to Controlled Assessment

Controlled Assessment is the means by which the internally assessed units in GCSE Digital Technology are completed by candidates. This approach puts 'controls' in place, under which the work of all candidates must be completed.

GCSE Digital Technology is comprised of five units. Candidates must complete three of these by choosing one of the two available routes through the qualification. Each route involves 70% assessment by examination (external assessment) and 30% Controlled Assessment (internal assessment).

Route A:
Multimedia

Unit 1 External Assessment (30%)	Unit 2 External Assessment (40%)	Unit 3 Controlled Assessment (30%)

OR

Unit 1 External Assessment (30%)	Unit 4 External Assessment (40%)	Unit 5 Controlled Assessment (30%)

Route B:
Programming

What are the Main Features of Controlled Assessment for GCSE Digital Technology?

- Controlled Assessment will be used to assess Unit 3: Digital Authoring Practice, and Unit 5: Digital Development Practice,

- each Controlled Assessment task is marked out of 60 and is worth 30% of the qualification,

- the Controlled Assessment tasks will be set by CCEA in June of each year, for first teaching the following academic year,

- each Controlled Assessment task will involve providing a solution to a problem set within a specific context,

- work can only be submitted for moderation in the summer series,

- students must complete the Controlled Assessment task they wish to submit for assessment under controlled conditions, and

- the same skills will be assessed each year in each task but the context within which the tasks are undertaken will change.

The Stages in GCSE Digital Technology Controlled Assessment

There are three key stages in the Controlled Assessment lifecycle, with each stage assigned a level of control which has been agreed by the regulatory authorities. The three key stages are:

- Task Setting
- Task Taking
- Task Marking

Task Setting

Level of Control: High

The level of control for the setting of Controlled Assessment tasks is **high.** This means that CCEA will set the tasks. These will be issued in June of each year, for first teaching the following September. This is to ensure that the tasks continue to provide an appropriate challenge.

Task Taking

Level of Control: Medium

Candidates must complete the task for the unit for which they are entered under a **Medium** level of control. Candidates who have chosen the multimedia route will be entered for Unit 3, while candidates who have chosen the programming route will be entered for Unit 5.

The tasks must be completed within the allotted time i.e. **36 hours.**

Candidates can carry out research and preliminary development work, such as identifying appropriate assets and sketching initial drafts of storyboards, to help them prepare for the Controlled Assessment tasks under limited supervision. This means this work can be done done at home. However, any work that contributes to the final task outcomes must all be produced in the controlled environment.

The teacher must be able to authenticate that all of the work produced by the candidate for final assessment is their own. For this reason, all of this work must be undertaken under informal supervision i.e. a **Medium** level of control.

This means that:

- candidates do not need to be supervised directly at all times but the vast majority of the work should be completed in school,

- resources used by candidates are not tightly prescribed and generic resources can be provided by the teacher,

- very general advice can be provided by the teacher to ensure that candidates understand the focus of the task, but specific direction should not be given, and

- work must be stored securely between sessions.

Task Marking

Level of Control: Medium

GCSE Digital Technology Controlled Assessment tasks are marked under a Medium level of control. This means that the Controlled Assessment tasks are internally marked and externally moderated by CCEA. Teachers must award marks to a candidate's work in accordance with the guidance laid out in the associated mark scheme.

Centres with more than one teaching group must carry out **internal standardisation** of the Controlled Assessment Tasks before submitting them to CCEA. This is to ensure, as far as possible, that all candidates at your centre have been marked to the same standard and that each teacher has applied the assessment criteria consistently when marking assessments. It may be necessary to adjust individual teachers' marking. Where adjustment is necessary, the total/final mark recorded on the Candidate Record Sheet should be amended.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What weighting is given to the Controlled Assessment tasks?**
   Controlled Assessment tasks account for 30% of overall assessment. Unit 1 is worth 30% and unit 2 is worth 30%. The two written examinations (Unit 1 and either Unit 2 or Unit 4) account for the other 70%.

2. **What skills are being assessed through the tasks?**
   Candidates are being asked to demonstrate that they can:

   • investigate and analyse problems,

   • design effective solutions,

   • develop solutions,

   • test and implement solutions, and

   • evaluate solutions.

3. **What level of control is in place for the Controlled Assessment tasks?**
   There are three stages of assessment and each is assigned a level of control:

   • Task Setting – **High** level of Control. All GCSE ICT Controlled Assessment tasks are set by CCEA.

   • Task Taking – **Medium** level of Control. Candidates must complete all work, except research, under **informal supervision** and this must be completed in the time set out in the task.

   • Task Marking – **Medium** level of Control. The work of each candidate must be marked by the teacher using the mark schemes provided by CCEA. A sample of work from each centre will then be moderated by CCEA in accordance with the guidance laid out in the Code of Practice.

4. **What is meant by the term 'informal supervision'?**
   The term 'informal supervision' means that candidates do not need to be supervised directly at all times. It also means that the resources that can be used by candidates are not tightly prescribed and that very general advice can be provided by the teacher to ensure that candidates understand the focus of the task.

5. **Can I support individual students?**
   Very general advice can be provided by the teacher to ensure that candidates understand the focus of the task but specific direction should not be given.

   A log should be kept of any advice that is given to a candidate that is over and above that which has been provided to the whole class and this information considered when marking the work. An explanation or annotation should be set out in the documentation provided by CCEA in preparation for moderation, to explain how marks were applied in the context of the additional assistance given.

6. **Can students use tutorials/help guides to assist them when completing the controlled assessment tasks?**
   Generic tutorials are allowed as long as they are clearly identified. However, a detailed help sheet which outlines how to address the specifics of a task is inappropriate and should not be provided.

7. **Can candidates work in groups?**
   Yes, candidates can work in groups, for example when carrying out research and other preparatory work, gathering user feedback or testing. However, the teacher must be in a position to confirm that the work submitted by the candidate is entirely their own.

8.   Can the time allocations for each assessment be broken up?
The total time allocated for assessments, i.e. 36 hours, can be divided in to manageable chunks.

9.   Do candidates have to reference sources they've used in the compilation of their solution?
The work submitted for assessment must include references where appropriate. To facilitate this, each candidate should keep a detailed record of his/her own research, planning, resources etc. The record should include all the sources used, including books, websites and audio/visual resources.

10.   Can my students re-sit a task again?
Students can re-sit a Controlled Assessment task but different conditions will apply depending on when they decide to re-sit.

- Before marks have been submitted to CCEA - Because GCSE Digital Technology Controlled Assessment tasks are taken under informal supervision, candidates can make changes to their work based on very general feedback from the teacher as they work through the tasks. However, teachers must not provisionally assess work and then allow the candidate to revise it. If the work has already been submitted to the teacher for final assessment, candidates cannot make any further amendments.

- After marks have been submitted to CCEA – Candidates can make another attempt at the task as long as the task is still valid i.e. it hasn't expired. The work that the candidate undertakes must be entirely new and conducted under appropriate supervision. Candidates must not be allowed to amend any work which has been previously submitted and CCEA reserves the right to confirm this using appropriate software.

11.   What should I do if I suspect the work that a candidate has produced is not their own?
The action that you take will depend on the point at which you became aware of suspected malpractice.

- Prior to signing the declaration of authentication – Do not accept the candidate's work for assessment and record a mark of zero for the internally assessed piece.

- After signing the declaration of authentication – in this instance the head of centre must submit full details of the case to CCEA immediately in accordance with JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice.

12.   As a school, do we have to ensure that we provide separate storage space for Controlled Assessment work on our network so that candidates cannot access their work from home?
As an awarding body, we are not in a position to advise how each school manages the practical security implications that Controlled Assessment brings because of the wide variation of resources at the disposal of individual centres.

The key to successful delivery of Controlled Assessment tasks is to ensure that you have a good understanding of the skills and capabilities of the students in your teaching group. It is of paramount importance that you are sure that the work that a candidate produces is solely their own and is reflective of what you would expect from them, bearing in mind the controls under which the task has been completed.

13.   A candidate from my centre has been unable to complete the Controlled Assessment task because of a prolonged illness. What should I do?
Teachers should be able to accommodate an occasional absence by arranging an alternative session for the candidate. However, in a situation where a candidate has been absent for a prolonged period of time, it may be appropriate to accept a reduced quantity of work, provided assessment objectives have been met elsewhere.

14. **A candidate in my class has lost all of their work. What should I do in this instance?**
Where possible, back-up procedures should be used to secure any work that is deemed important to avoid this situation arising. In the event that a candidate's work is lost, the Subject Officer should be contacted immediately and each case will be considered individually by CCEA.

A mark that has been awarded by the teacher may be accepted where:

- The centre can verify that the work was completed, and

- The loss is not as a result of negligence on the part of the candidate.

15. **A student has just moved to our school from another centre and has only partially completed a Controlled Assessment unit. What should I do?**
Please contact the Subject Officer at CCEA in the first instance. The course of action that you may be advised to take will depend on how much work the candidate has completed.

16. **Do GCSE Digital Technology Controlled Assessment tasks contribute to the 40% terminal rule?**
Yes, Controlled Assessment units do contribute to the 40% terminal requirement. However, because they are worth only 30%, they must be completed alongside at least one other unit in the series in which the candidate is cashing in.

17. **Am I required to tell candidates what marks they have been awarded?**
Yes, the centre must inform candidates of their centre assessed marks. This is because a candidate is allowed to request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to CCEA. To accommodate this, the centre must allow sufficient time for the candidate to review materials and for the teacher to carry out a review of marking, if requested.