WORKPLACE CORE SKILLS
ASSESSMENT SUPPORT PACK

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY
SCQF Level 6

Part 1: Information for assessors

Part 2: Exemplar assessment tasks

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

Part 1: Information for assessors

What is involved?

The Unit is designed for the workplace and the content should involve tasks and skills that are suited to the requirements of the candidates' working environment. The focus of the Unit is how well candidates use a data source / software application, not how many are used. Candidates will demonstrate their ICT skills by:

- using computerised technologies
- using applications software
- finding and presenting information from electronic data sources

These skills should be useful to candidates in their current and future jobs, as well as in their social and personal lives.

The Unit is designed for those who have significant skill and experience in using ICT within the workplace. The work undertaken in the assessments should be complex, and will require knowledge or experience of formal workplace technologies, for example, at managerial level. The Unit might be suitable for candidates who are currently working towards an SVQ/NVQ at Level 4.

ICT tasks can be combined with other Core Skills Units, such as Communication, Numeracy, Problem Solving, Working with Others. If you adopt this approach, records must be kept for each Core Skills Unit.

Guidance on the Unit

Candidates at SCQF Level 6 are required to work independently, and in contexts which require some design and selection when using computer technologies to carry out the tasks.

The “What do I need to do” section of the Unit lists knowledge, understanding and competence which the candidates must have and what they need to do to prove this. You may want to discuss these with the candidates. The following notes give detailed pointers on the things candidates need to know and be able to do:

What candidates need to do:

Performing ICT operations

Candidates have to show ability in interacting with the operating system, application software and computer hardware. The candidates are required to resolve common hardware and software problems. In order to do this independently the candidates need to know how to access help, such as that found online or onscreen from help files on their computer.

Candidates must be able to use the appropriate modes of displaying information. An activity may require them to display results on the monitor screen, print out results or play a multi-media file as video or audio.

Processing information

This part of the Unit requires the candidates to use at least one type of applications software to carry out a range of complex ICT activities.

In some workplaces, an appropriate single software application can be used to give a range of activities. Otherwise, several applications can be used by the candidates to obtain this range.

When candidates carry out complex activities in unfamiliar contexts, it is likely that they will need to explore new software applications or new facets of a familiar software application. The candidates will have to spend some time in refining the task’s problem to analyse the information requirements and design their solution.

The candidates will probably be regularly using various applications in the workplace.

They should already have in-depth knowledge of these applications as well as the experience of approaching unfamiliar situations.

No example tasks are supplied in this support pack, as at this level the task should be drawn from the work environment. You should help candidates choose a suitably complex task for the assessment of this area. It may be that you will have to 'tweak' a work situation problem to make sure that it meets all the requirements of the Unit.

The candidates must be able to select and launch the correct application for their task.

Although not mentioned specifically in the Unit, it is expected that the candidates will produce their tasks within a reasonable timescale, accurately and with results meeting the desired purpose. This means a performance equal to that expected in the workplace, even if the candidates are performing tasks set by you.

Finding information using ICT

At SCQF 6 Level, the candidates have to show that they can carry out complex information searches including the following:

- careful definition of search topic and evaluation criteria
- establishing a search strategy
- evaluating the information found
- reviewing their search strategy

Before starting the searching, the candidates should spend some time producing a precise specification of the search and deciding on criteria with which to evaluate the results. The search criteria might include relevance to search, correct level of detail, currency of data and appropriateness of format. Particularly for information searched via the Internet, the candidates should look at the likely reliability of the data being aware of bias and of the possibility of a deliberate hoax.

The candidates should create a strategy, where the most likely sources are selected, a logical order of searching the sources decided, the best search terms (keywords) chosen, and search logic is used to combine search terms.

As each item of information is found, it should be evaluated to see how well it matches the search criteria.

Once the results have been produced, candidates are required to look at how well their search strategy worked. For example, they might look at: the ease with which it produced required results; the possibility that it left out some useful results; the effectiveness in terms of cost and time.

It is expected that the information be both located and integrated. The results of the search may be a presentation or a report on the search topic.

It is likely that candidates who carry out searches routinely perform the above steps automatically. However for the purposes of the Unit, all the above steps should be documented. Only one search is required.

Although the above has mentioned finding information from the Internet, the searching can be related to information held on the candidate's own machine or on local databases. The information sought need not be text-based, and could be graphical or multimedia-based.

Although the search has to be documented, possibly as a written report, the resulting information should be presented by the candidates in the appropriate manner eg displayed on screen or played as an audio file.

Keeping information safe

The candidates must demonstrate safe practice with the information which they handle using:

- password security
- anti-virus protection
- backing up of data
- maintenance of personal file area

Candidates are expected to carry out the above routinely. In different workplaces there will be particular policies which lay down exact procedure and some aspects such as backups will be run automatically. Candidates will be expected to follow these policies. Regarding the automatic processes, the candidates must understand exactly what they do and appreciate their importance.

How do candidates show they have achieved the Unit?

The Unit requires the candidates to provide evidence for each of the four tasks:

Task 1: Performing ICT operations

Carry out ICT activities related to their work.

Task 2: Processing information

Carry out a range of complex ICT activities related to their work which involve using at least one software application.

Task 3: Finding information

Use ICT to locate information relevant to their work. A range of sources will be used and search techniques and search criteria employed. The search strategy will be complex and should be evaluated at the end of the process. The search can be for textual information or a graphics, audio or video file.

Task 4: Keeping information safe

Demonstrate safe practice in using ICT to handle information.

There is no set number of times candidates should perform each of the individual tasks. They should be performed as often as is required for the assessor to be confident that the performance is consistently accurate.

Assessment requirements

Candidates must make effective and responsible use of hardware devices and software applications, demonstrating due attention to other users. They should be aware of common hardware and software problems. When extracting and presenting information from an electronic data source, candidates may use either a local or remote data sources eg local database, CD-ROM/ websites. The data source should require several straightforward choices, or have a less obvious structure, or more complex inter-relationships. Information may be textual, numerical, graphical, audio etc. Candidates should be discerning in their choice of websites/data sources, having regard for factors such as reliability, currency, authority, bias, etc.

Gathering evidence

It may be appropriate for you to gather written evidence produced by the candidates while carrying out the practical tasks. However, written evidence is not essential for this Unit and is inappropriate if it disadvantages the candidates.

You may wish instead to observe the candidates carrying out a task and use oral questioning. This requires you to create and complete a record of questions asked and candidate responses.

From the candidate's point of view, it is useful to have the means of keeping all the work of this Unit together. You can help here by creating and providing a workbook which includes all the evidence-gathering items. An alternative would be to provide worksheets which can be made into a portfolio or e-portfolio.

If you have chosen to integrate the ICT work with other Units being undertaken by the candidates, it may be possible to assess the ICT as part of a larger single activity. In this case you must keep separate records for this Unit.

You should try to identify naturally-occurring opportunities for assessment where possible. Some of the exemplars in this pack could be used or contextualised for this purpose.

The assessment process is likely to involve one or more of the following:

- observation
- recording
- oral questioning

When assessing by observation, you must keep a detailed checklist. Similarly, if you use oral questioning, you must keep a record of both the questions and candidate responses. All evidence, whether produced by the candidate or a record made by yourself, must be retained, signed and dated by you.

Planning

You should work out where opportunities for meeting the Unit standards are likely to arise. Where possible, these should be built into the assessment process. You should explain and discuss this assessment process with the candidates so that they are clear about what is expected of them.

Part 2: Exemplar assessment tasks

Note for assessors

You can use the exemplar assessments given in this section in several ways:

- to illustrate to candidates the type of materials that could be used to generate evidence
- to help identify the type and amount of evidence which candidates should have gathered in their portfolio
- to help identify the level of complexity in evidence required for the Core Skill at this level
- to help you to identify / create an assessment task related to the candidate's own work environment
- as an off-the-shelf assessment although every effort should be made to source/provide candidates with assessment materials which relate to their specific area of work

Task 1: Performing ICT operations — the exemplar is in the form of a candidate instruction sheet.

Task 2: Processing information — the exemplar is in the form of a candidate instruction sheet.

Task 3: Finding information — the exemplar is in the form of a candidate instruction sheet. A search engine/internet information task has been chosen here, so that a thorough evaluation of the results is necessary.

Task 4: Keeping information safe — the exemplar is in the format of a candidate instruction sheet. Since all four topics may be strictly governed by workplace rules, you will need to tailor your approach once you establish what these rules are.

Task 1: Performing ICT operations

Carry out the following two activities:

1 Resolve common hardware and software problems

2 Present information in the appropriate way for the chosen activity, for example, printed, displayed on screen or through multimedia files

Task 2: Processing information

Discuss and agree the suitability of the processing task with your assessor then:

1 Create a specification for the task detailing the information sources, processing and output information.

2 Choose appropriate software, familiarising yourself with it as necessary.

3 Carry out the processing.

4 Create the output data in the desired format.

5 Produce any additional documentation required.

Task 3: Finding information

Discuss the topic of your search with your assessor then:

1 Define precisely the search topic.

2 Draw up evaluation criteria for the results of the search.

3 Draw up a search strategy including points such as: likely sources, order of use of sources and suitable search terms (keywords).

4 Carry out the searching process.

5 Evaluate the items of information you find using your evaluation criteria.

6 Evaluate your search strategy in the light of the information you have found.

7 Document your search.

Task 4: Keeping information safe

Carry out each of the following:

1 provide an explanation of the importance of password security

2 use anti-virus software appropriately

3 operate a data backup policy

4 maintain your personal file area

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

This section gives some examples of forms which could be used by the candidates and/or assessors to gather evidence and record assessment decisions.

You are encouraged to adapt these materials to suit you and your candidate's preferred approach i.e. boxes can be made bigger, format can be changed to a non-table format, font size etc.

Assessment Plan

You should work out where naturally-occurring opportunities for meeting the standards are likely to arise and, where possible, build them into the assessment process.

You should explain and discuss the assessment process with candidates so they are clear about what is expected of them.

Assessment Checklists

Candidates could use the assessment checklists as a means of cross referencing evidence in their portfolio to the Unit.

Assessors could use the assessment checklists to record assessment decisions and any relevant comments.

Summary Checklist

The summary checklist enables you to record the results from the assessment checklists on a single form.

Assessment Plan

ICT (SCQF Level 6)

Candidate: _____

Task to be assessed: _____

Proposed date of assessment: _____

Proposed method of assessment	Tick	Notes
Assignment or project		
Observed performance		
Witness testimony		
Written questions		
Oral questioning		
Product evaluation, eg, written document		
Previous evidence		
Other evidence		

Details agreed and signed by:

Assessor _____

Candidate _____

Line Manager (if required) _____

Date _____

Assessment Checklist

ICT (SCQF Level 6)

Task 1: Performing ICT operations

Candidate Name:_____ Date:_____

Task 1: Carry out ICT activities related to your work.			
Carried out operations on folders and files for each of the following:	**Evidence**	**Assessor initials & date**	**Comments**
Resolved common hardware and software problems			
Presented information in a suitable way which is helpful to others, for example on screen, print out or audio file			

Assessment Checklist

ICT (SCQF Level 6)

Task 2: Processing information

Candidate Name:_____ Date:_____

Task 2: Carry out a range of complex ICT activities related to your work which involve application software.			
	Evidence	**Assessor initials & date**	**Comments**
Selected and launched application software suitable for the tasks for example, word processing, spreadsheet, database, media packages			
Entered, processed and output data			

Assessment Checklist

ICT (SCQF Level 6)

Task 3: Accessing information

Candidate Name:_____ Date:_____

Task 3: Use ICT to locate information relevant to your work			
	Evidence	**Assessor initials & date**	**Comments**
Located information in different formats from a range of local or remote data sources			
Applied a complex search strategy to find information, for example: choice of sources, order of searching, choice of keywords, use of search logic, application of search parameters, menu and open choice searching.			
Evaluated information found against given criteria, for example: currency, level of difficulty, reliability, authority, bias, relevance, appropriateness of format			
Evaluated search strategy, for example: did it produce information which matched chosen criteria, was it effective in terms of time and cost, did it filter out information which would not have been useful			

Assessment Checklist

ICT (SCQF Level 6)

Task 4: Keeping information safe

Candidate Name:_____ Date:_____

Task 4: Demonstrate safe practice in using ICT to handle information			
	Evidence	**Assessor initials & date**	**Comments**
using passwords			
using virus protection software			
backing up data			
maintaining personal file area			

Summary Checklist

ICT (SCQF Level 6)

Candidate Name:_____

Candidate Number:_____

Centre:_____

Task	Date achieved
1 Performing ICT operations	
2 Processing information	
3 Finding information	
4 Keeping information safe	
Assessor's signature:_____	Date:_____

ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Credit Value

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