

J253 Controlled Assessment FAQs

When can controlled assessments be taken?

Controlled Assessment is a form of internal assessment and as such there isn't a specified date in which controlled assessment has to be taken.

It is up to the centre to decide when controlled assessment will be taken: guidance on this can be found in *Section 5: Controlled Assessment* of all revised GCSE Specifications (first teaching in September 2009).

When can teachers and candidates access the material?

Controlled Assessment tasks will be available from Interchange on 1 June of the year prior to an assessment series, i.e. 1 June 2010 for assessment in June 2011 series.

Tasks change every year and it is the responsibility of centres to make sure that candidates are submitting the correct task. Tasks will be taken off Interchange on May 15 every year for these subjects.

Can any preparation work be done out of the classroom?

Yes. Controls are set at the level of tasks setting, task taking and task marking. Preparation work comes into the task taking level, under Research and Data Collection, which have a limited level of control i.e. work can be carried out without direct supervision. More guidance on this can be found in *Section 5: Controlled Assessment* of all revised GCSE Specifications (first teaching in September 2009).

Is there a minimum or maximum time that can be spent on the assessments?

Suggested time limits vary per subject: there are suggested time limits given in *Section 5: Controlled Assessment* of all revised GCSE Specifications (first teaching in September 2009).

Where can the controlled materials be accessed and by whom?

Controlled Assessment tasks and other documents (see first paragraph at top of document) are accessed via Interchange.

Centre access to the Interchange controlled assessment area will be available to the registered Centre User (normally the Examinations Officer). However, the Centre User can set access permissions to others within their centre, eg HODs, subject leaders or subject teachers.

How long is each assessment valid for, i.e. can they use last year's assessment this year?

Tasks change every year and it is the responsibility of centres to make sure that candidates are submitting the correct task. Tasks will be taken off Interchange on May 15 every year for these subjects.

Where can the Mark Schemes be accessed?

Mark Schemes are included in the specifications and can also be accessed from the OCR website: Mark Schemes are attached at the end of each Sample Assessment Material.

Do we have to take the controlled assessment under exam conditions/teacher supervision?

Yes, but only for task taking, i.e. the last part of controlled assessment when candidates are producing their final piece of work – note that this can be over more than one supervised session. More guidance on this can be found in *Section 5: Controlled Assessment* of all revised GCSE Specifications (first teaching in September 2009).

Are the controlled assessments the same as written examinations, can we resit?

Yes, controlled assessed units can be re-sat but as with any other unit this can be done only once and keeping in mind the 40% terminal rule, which means that 40% of the assessment has to be taken in the examination series in which the qualification has to be awarded.

Centres have the responsibility to ensure that the correct tasks are used for a controlled assessment resit.

Are materials sent based on estimated entries or can we download them from Interchange?

Tasks will only be available as downloads from Interchange: they will not be sent to centres.

Do we mark them or does OCR?

Controlled assessment tasks for ALL subjects are internally marked by centres and externally moderated by OCR.

How many Controlled Assessments are there to choose from?

There are two.

How much time should I give to completing the Controlled Assessment?

The specification recommends that up to 16 hours in total be allocated to completing the Controlled Assessment. This time is divided up into (up to) 10 hours on the research stage, and (up to) 6 hours on the writing stage.

What type of research is expected from candidates?

In their research time, candidates should collect both primary and secondary data. This may be in the form of questionnaires, photographs, internet research, use of text books etc. The data must be able to support an answer to the Investigations detailed in the Controlled Assessment.

Do all candidates at my centre have to do the same Controlled Assessment?

No. Candidates can complete either of the two choices.

How often do the Controlled Assessments change?

They are changed every year, which means that they can only be re-submitted in the same academic year.

What sort of material is provided in the Controlled Assessment?

There will be background information in text form on a business situation, and a variety of numerical data.

Is the Controlled Assessment just like previous OCR Business Studies coursework?

No. There are some similarities, in that there is research to be completed, analysis of data and recommendations made, but there are significant differences in structure and administration. There is a series of three tasks in a Controlled Assessment which target areas of the specification content, unlike coursework which had a single title. The addition of pre release material for the Controlled Assessment is new.

Will there be separate information for each Controlled Assessment?

No. The information provided will be for both of the Controlled Assessments.

Will I have to teach all the specification content on Marketing and Enterprise before I begin the Controlled Assessment?

It is up to you. Some teachers will want to cover all the specification and then complete the three tasks together. Others may choose to study the specification material in stages, and do each of the tasks separately.

Can I choose my own title for the work as I have done in the past?

No. The choice must be between one of the two Controlled Assessments issued by OCR each year.

How will I mark a Controlled Assessment?

Teachers will use the assessment marking grid to help judge the correct mark to give a piece of work using a 'best fit' method.

Has the marking changed from previous OCR coursework?

Yes. The number of marking criteria has been reduced from six to three. The three new marking criteria are directly linked to the three assessment objectives, which are briefly:

Knowledge and understanding

Application

Analysis and evaluation.

When should I do the Controlled Assessment?

The choice is yours. What must be remembered when making the choice is that the title for a Controlled Assessment only lasts for one academic year. So if you feel that you may want to re-submit the work of candidates in the hope of improving marks, the re-submission must be in the same academic year. It will not be possible to complete work and submit at the end of Year 10 and then re-submit sometime in Year 11. In practical terms, if you feel that you would like to have the opportunity to re-submit work, then the original entry would need to be made in the January session of Years 10 or 11, with a view to re-submitting the work in the June of the same year.

Do I have to enter candidates as soon as I have completed the Controlled Assessment?

No. Work that is completed say in early October in Year 11 can be entered in the January or June sessions of that same academic year.

Will candidates be penalised if they write over 2000 words?

No, 2000 words is a guideline and not a word limit. The controlled assessment is restricted by the six hour time limit for report writing. Candidates should, however, be instructed to be succinct in their write up and plan their work during the preparation phase.

Can candidates re-work their controlled assessment for a re-submission?

No, candidates must not be allowed to amend the work which was submitted previously. The work presented for assessment, carried out under controlled conditions, must be entirely new. However, candidates may re-use the research carried out previously if the task is still appropriate for the year of assessment (e.g. June 2011 from January 2011).