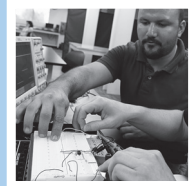


Work place Core Skills Unit

ICT SCQF level 4 Assessment Support Pack



What are Core Skills?

Core Skills are skills and abilities which everyone needs in their work. This is true for every job in every workplace.

The Core Skills are:

- Communication
- Numeracy
- Information and Communication Technology
- Problem Solving
- Working with Others

Employers look for Core Skills when they are appointing new staff. They also expect their existing staff to have these skills.

Core Skills are important because they help you work effectively in your present job and also prepare you for jobs which you will do in future. Developing your Core Skills helps you deal with today's rapidly changing world and improve your career prospects.

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 Information and Communication Technology (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 some skill and experience in using ICT within the workplace. The work undertaken in the assessments should be routine, eg at assistant worker level. The Unit might be suitable for candidates who are currently working towards an SVQ/NVQ at level 2 or level 3.

ICT tasks can be combined with other Core Skills Units: Communication, Numeracy, Problem Solving, and 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 4 are required to use computer technologies to carry out straightforward and familiar processing tasks. They are required to carry out the tasks with a degree of independence but may need some guidance with technical terminology either from you, or from a supervisor or other workplace mentor.

The 'What do I need to do' section of the Unit lists the knowledge, understanding, and competence that 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. This provides the user interface allowing application software to be run and files to be manipulated.

The candidates must be able to use straightforward tools such as a file manager or print manager and control panels such as that for display settings.

They are required to create an organised set of folders and subfolders for their ICT activities, using appropriately chosen names for all folders and files.

The 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 multimedia 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 ICT activities. These activities will each follow the classic pattern of entering, processing, and outputting data. Ideally, the applications should be used by the candidates routinely in their workplace. In an office workplace, examples are a word processor, a spread sheet, or a presentation package.

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

If the candidates do not routinely use applications software in the workplace, you must ensure that they are familiar with the applications chosen by you. You should choose applications that are likely to be of use to the candidates later.

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

Finding information using ICT

There are three common scenarios for finding information using ICT. These may be generalised as:

- ◆ finding information on own machine, eg searching for an e-mail by a particular sender
- ◆ extracting information from a database application by searching for a particular record
- ◆ using a search engine to find information on a topic from the internet

At SCQF level 4 candidates have to carry out a number of straightforward searches or one sustained search. For all searches, candidates are expected to use techniques to filter their search results with appropriate criteria. This is a level above just typing in one search term to generate the results. For example, when using search engines, candidates might use quotation marks to search for exact phrases or include additional keywords to narrow the search. There must also be an element of inspecting the results where only appropriate ones should be chosen by the candidates. As an example, it may be necessary to choose results applying only to the UK (vital in searches on policy or with legal implications). Although the search terms might include 'UK', the candidates still need to inspect the results carefully.

If the candidates carry out a number of straightforward searches, they should be from different sources or use different search criteria. The searches could all involve using a search engine but not all be searches to find a client address. If carried out routinely in the workplace, these searches can take place at different points in the candidates' working time and not be related in any way. A 'sustained search', while still showing some variety in criteria or sources, will consist of searches that are combined together to give a result. The candidates will see the searches as all part of a single task.

The information sought need not be text-based, and could be graphical or multimedia-based.

The resulting information should be presented by the candidates in the appropriate manner, such as displayed on screen, as a printout, or the playing of an audio file.

If you decide to use a number of straightforward searches, a suitable number is four different searches.

Keeping information safe

Candidates must demonstrate safe practice with the information they handle. In many workplaces the most important practice is password security. This can prevent personal identity theft for the candidates but more importantly keep workplace information safe by preventing unauthorised access to confidential files. Candidates should not write down access details or give them out to unauthorised people.

In many cases, candidates will be automatically restricted in the types of information they can access in the workplace. It is important that they understand what they are allowed to access and what they are permitted to do with the information. For example, they may be allowed to view but not alter certain files. They may only be allowed to use a limited range of software out of what is actually available on the workplace computers. If they perceive a need to step outside these constraints, they must ask permission from the correct colleague before proceeding.

The online world brings additional problems for keeping information safe. Candidates should be aware of the techniques used by fraudulent websites to obtain information. Candidates should demonstrate safe practice such as looking for the secure padlock on commerce sites and recognising potentially dangerous e-mail attachments.

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 that involve straightforward operations.

Task 2: Processing information

Carry out a range of straightforward ICT activities related to their work that 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 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 required for the assessor to be confident that the performance is consistently accurate.

Assessment requirements

Candidates must produce work effectively, eg in a reasonable timescale to meet the desired purpose and level of accuracy. This means a performance equal to that expected in the workplace, even if the candidates are performing tasks set by you.

When searching, extracting, and presenting information from an electronic data source, candidates may use either a local or remote source, eg local database, CD-ROM, website. The data source should either be familiar to the candidate or have a structure for searching that offers straightforward choices. Information may be textual, numerical, graphical, audio, 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 that includes all the evidence-gathering items. An alternative would be to provide worksheets that 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 the 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 that 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 that 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. The range of straightforward activities is demonstrated here in the use of three general-purpose software applications. You may choose to use a range of activities within a single software application.

Task 3: Finding information — The exemplar is in the form of a candidate instruction sheet. This area of the Unit can be covered in many different ways, from a purely search engine information task to the use of an in-house database. This particular exercise requires the candidates to use several differently organised internet databases. Because information sources change unpredictably on the internet, you should check that the four web addresses given on the candidate instruction sheet operate as expected. If not you will need to find substitute websites.

Task 4: Keeping information safe — You can use the exemplar to have a discussion with the candidate. Introduce each of the topics and make a note of their responses on the sheet. Alternatively, you might choose to give the sheet to the candidates and ask them to complete it under test conditions.

Task 1: Performing ICT operations

Your assessor will check that you:

- ◆ can use control panels correctly (print manager, file manager, and display settings)
- ◆ have a well-organised folder system with appropriate names used throughout
- ◆ are able to present information in the appropriate way, eg printed or displayed on screen, and to use multimedia files correctly

Task 2: Processing information

Carry out the following three activities.

1 A client orders the following items at the following prices. Enter this information into your spreadsheet application (note the formatting — headings are bold).

Client order ref: HHW0023			
Item	Unit cost(£)	Quantity	Line cost
Black ballpoints	0.12	300	
Sticky notes	0.35	100	
Notepads	0.60	250	
Paperclips	0.55	250	
Total cost			

- a) Apply formulae to calculate each of the line costs.
- b) Apply a formula to calculate the total cost.
- c) Show the resulting spreadsheet to your assessor on the monitor.
- d) Because the client has achieved 'frequent buyer' status, you can offer all the line costs at a 20% discount. Insert an additional column giving the reduced line costs and new total cost.
- e) Print out a copy of the resulting spreadsheet.

- 2** You need a short standard business letter letting the client know that they have achieved 'frequent buyer' status and that you are able to give a 20% reduction on each of the line costs of their order above. The client details are:

Stationery Buyer, Holmes Handy Works, 17a High Street, Newtown, SX1 6EB.

- a) Use your word processor to prepare the letter.
- b) Check all your spelling.
- c) Save and print out the letter.
- d) Close down the word processor application.
- e) Open up the letter file and use it as a template to relay the same information to the accounts department of the client company. The contact details are:

Finance Department, Holmes Handy Works, Congle House, 206 Western Way, Newtown, SX34 7XV.

- f) Save and print out the new letter.

- 3** Choose suitable software to produce an A4 poster to publicise the 'frequent buyer' status. This applies to any order where more than half the lines are for quantities of more than 200 units. Your company's contact details are:

Cut Price Stationers, 235 West Lane, Newtown SX3 5VV.

Telephone: 01155 883 889, E-mail: orders@cpstationers.co.uk

- a) Create the poster using appropriate coloured fonts.
- b) Save and print out the poster.

Task 3: Finding information

Your line manager has asked you to find accommodation for the nights of 14th, 15th and 16th of next month for a room with single occupancy. The destination is Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

- 1) Use both of the hotel booking sites below to select the same three suitable hotels in the mid price range.

www.hotels.co.uk

www.expedia.co.uk

- 2) Investigate the findings of the two hotel review sites below for each of the three hotels.

www.tripadvisor.com

www.hotelshark.com

- 3) Summarise your findings briefly in e-mail form, giving your suggested ranking of the suitability of the three hotels.
- 4) Print out your e-mail.

Task 4: Keeping information safe

For each of the following questions, write down your answers in the space provided.

Q1 When using the internet to make purchases, describe two precautions you could take to ensure online safety.

Q2 You have a friend called Jem Jones. How would you deal with each of the following e-mails coming to your inbox?

	Sender	Topic	Attachment
1	Jem Jones	Party next week	none
2	Jem Jones	Terrorist Atttack	Friday
3	Jem Jones	Last night at club	pic.jpg
4	Jem Jones	none	tryit.exe

Write your responses in the numbered areas

1	
2	
3	
4	

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

This section gives some examples of forms that 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, ie 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 4)

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 4)

Task 1: Performing ICT operations

Candidate name: _____

Date: _____

Task 1: Carry out ICT activities related to your work which involve straightforward operations.

	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Used straightforward tools, eg file manager, print manager, or control panels			
Named and organised folders and sub-folders			
Presented information in a suitable way that is helpful to others, eg on-screen, print out, or audio file			

Assessment checklist

ICT (SCQF level 4)

Task 2: Processing
information

Candidate name: _____

Date: _____

Task 2: Carry out simple ICT activities related to your work which involve using menu-based applications software.

	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Selected application software suitable for the task			
Entered, edited, processed, and output data			

Assessment checklist

ICT (SCQF level 4)

Task 3: Finding
information

Candidate name: _____

Date: _____

Task 3: Use ICT to locate information relevant to your work.			
	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Located information in different formats from a range of local or remote data sources, eg internet, CD-ROM, intranet, own computer			
Used appropriate search techniques, eg choice of keywords, phrases within quotes, find tools			
Selected relevant information that matches criteria, eg date of information, UK information, media type (text, numerical, graphical, audio)			

Assessment checklist

ICT (SCQF level 4)

Task 4: Keeping
information safe

Candidate name: _____

Date: _____

Task 4: Demonstrate safe practice in using ICT to handle information.			
	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Recognised security risks and acted accordingly, eg: ◆ Keeping own log-in and password secure ◆ Taking precautions when on-line			

Summary checklist

ICT (SCQF level 4)

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

6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4



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