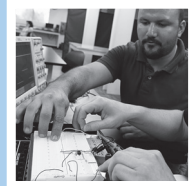


Work place Core Skills Unit

ICT SCQF level 5 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 a reasonable level of skill and experience in using ICT within the workplace. The work undertaken in the assessments should have some complex aspects and will require knowledge or experience of formal workplace technologies, eg at intermediate or supervisor level. The Unit might be suitable for candidates who are currently working towards an SVQ/NVQ at level 3 or level 4.

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 5 are required to use computer technologies to carry out a range of non-routine and familiar processing tasks. They should require little support to carry out the tasks 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 and common features of application software. The candidates are required to use hardware responsibly, taking account of other users' needs.

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 non-routine 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.

Non-routine activities include those where data is processed sequentially. This may be carried out by one or more than one application. An example of this is where a database program is used to select certain clients whose addresses are then used in a mail merge by a word processor.

In the case that 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 in the future.

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 5 level the candidates have to show that they can carry out a fairly complex information search, including the following:

- ◆ establishing a search strategy
- ◆ evaluating the information found
- ◆ reviewing the search strategy

Before starting the searching, the candidates should create a strategy in which the most likely sources are selected, the order of searching sources is considered, and the best keywords are selected.

As each item of information is found, it should be evaluated to see how well it matches the requirements. This could cover relevance to search, 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 deliberate hoax.

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; its effectiveness in terms of cost and time.

The Unit asks that the information be both located and integrated. This means that the results of the search will be combined within a presentation or a report on the search topic.

It is likely that candidates who carry out searches routinely will 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 a local database. 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.

There are many internet resources on searching and evaluation so you can point candidates in that direction if they need more information.

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 and, 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. The candidates should demonstrate safe practice at all times and use virus protection.

In some workplaces there will be a policy and a system that will periodically make an automatic back up of the computer files. However, the candidates must understand the importance of backing up data and in many work situations should be making backups themselves.

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 non-routine 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 strategy will be evaluated. 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.

When extracting and presenting information from an electronic data source, candidates may use either local or remote data sources, eg 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, 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 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. You will need to supply a set of illustrative graphics and a suitable client details database file.

The range of non-routine activities uses three general-purpose software applications. You may choose to use a range of activities within a single software application. Although general-purpose applications are used, there is a degree of complexity, with data being processed and integrated in successive steps.

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 three topics may be strictly governed by workplace rules, you may need to tailor your approach once you establish what these rules are.

Task 1: Performing ICT operations

Carry out the following two activities:

- ◆ Show that you can use hardware responsibly and take account of other users' needs.
- ◆ Present information in the appropriate way for the chosen activity, eg printed, displayed on screen, or through multimedia files.

Task 2: Processing information

Carry out the following three activities.

- 1 You are required to analyse the following data provided by local house builders. It shows how many homes of different types have been built by each builder during the past year.

Builder	1-bed flat	2-bed flat	3-bed flat	2-bed semi	3-bed semi	Detached house
Probuild	16	22	8	28	32	17
Smith Builder	0	24	0	16	8	3
Andy Preston	29	22	10	0	12	0
Buildgood	6	18	0	0	0	21
Sinhouse	3	6	0	4	18	0
Raulton	0	12	0	8	34	0
McKinnone	15	34	8	40	44	18

- a) Using your spreadsheet software, enter the data, producing a well formatted layout.
- b) Print a copy of the spreadsheet.
- c) Rearrange the spreadsheet with the builders in alphabetical order.
- d) Put in an extra row at the foot of the table and using formulae display the total number of each type of home built.
- e) Put in an extra column at the right of the table and using formulae display the total number of homes build by each builder.
- f) Print out a copy of the spreadsheet.
- g) Create a pie chart showing the proportions of the total numbers of the different types of homes built. Display each category and value as a percentage on the pie chart.
- h) Create a bar chart comparing the total number of homes built by each of the builders.

- i) Ensure that both graphics are adequately labelled and captioned.
 - j) Save and close the spreadsheet.
- 2** You are required to use your word processor to prepare a short report based on the data from the spreadsheet in part 1.
- a) Create a new document and write a short paragraph describing the data existing in the spreadsheet.
 - b) Open the spreadsheet and copy the spreadsheet data, pasting it as a table in the word processor.
 - c) In the word processor extend the table by two additional rows at the top.
 - d) In the new top row, merge the cells and insert a suitable title for the table.
 - e) Your assessor will supply you with six graphics. In the new second top row, insert one graphic for each house type.
 - f) Copy the pie chart and the bar chart created in the spreadsheet graphics to the word processor document as graphics.
 - g) Write a short paragraph for each graphic, briefly describing what it shows.
 - h) Format all aspects of the whole document to give it a uniform appearance and supply a title for it.
 - i) Save and print out the document.
- 3** Your assessor will supply you with a database of client contact details, which you will use in a mail merge.
- a) Write a short business letter describing the report you have produced.
 - b) Create place holders for the address and name of the recipient.
 - c) Use your database software to create a file of clients whose surname begins with the letter M.
 - d) Carry out the mail merge, using the file just produced, only creating documents for recipients whose surname begins with the letter M.
 - e) Print out the letters.

Task 3: Finding information

Discuss the topic of your search with your assessor then:

1 Draw up a search strategy, including points such as:

- ◆ likely sources
- ◆ the order in which sources will be searched
- ◆ suitable search terms (keywords)

2 Carry out the searching process.

3 Evaluate the items of information you find for suitability and reliability.

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

5 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.

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

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 5)

Task 1: Performing ICT operations

Candidate name: _____

Date: _____

Task 1: Carry out ICT activities related to your work.

	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Carried out operations on folders and files for each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Used hardware responsibly, taking account of other users' needs◆ Presented information in a suitable way that is helpful to others, eg on-screen, print out, or audio file			

Assessment checklist

ICT (SCQF level 5)

Task 2: Processing
information

Candidate name: _____

Date: _____

Task 2: Carry out a range of non-routine ICT activities related to your work that involve application software.

	Evidence	Assessor initials and date	Comments
Selected and launched application software suitable for the tasks, eg word processing, spreadsheet, database, media packages			
Entered, processed, and output data			

Assessment checklist

ICT (SCQF level 5)

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			
Applied a search strategy to find information matching given criteria, eg choice of sources, order of searching, choice of keywords			
Evaluated information found against given criteria, eg currency, level of difficulty, reliability, bias, relevance, appropriateness of format			
Evaluated search strategy, eg did it produce information that matched chosen criteria, was it effective in terms of time and cost, did it filter out information that would not have been useful			

Assessment checklist

ICT (SCQF level 5)

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
Kept data secure by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ using passwords◆ using virus protection software◆ backing up data			

Summary checklist

ICT (SCQF level 5)

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 5



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