

Guidance on the use of robotic telescopes to complete Controlled Assessment tasks in GCSE Astronomy

Several of the Controlled Assessment tasks listed in the Aided (List B) section of the GCSE Astronomy Specification are suitable for completion using one of the robotic telescopes available to candidates via the internet. Access to these large telescopes clearly extends the range of objects available to GCSE Astronomers as well as the detail with which familiar objects can be observed.

For the GCSE Astronomy Controlled Assessment to be secure, the basic requirement is for centres to ensure that all students design, take, process and evaluate their own observations, whatever instrument or equipment is used. The particular profile of Level of Control for Astronomy allows students to complete the observing stage of the process outside school hours and premises.

Centres should take steps to ensure that each student is obtaining and processing their own individual images. Each student should therefore work with their own password-protected username, either for their centre's internal network or for the particular robotic telescope website.