

GCSE Computing (J275): Units A452 and A453 Controlled assessment

Frequently Asked Questions: July 2014

Summary

The availability of model answers to live controlled assessment tasks for two units of GCSE Computing J275 on a number of public websites means OCR has had to act so that the assessment is not compromised and all students receive the results they deserve.

While there is no suggestion of widespread malpractice - we have to act to avoid the slightest possibility that one candidate could gain an unfair advantage over another. As a result, we decided on 1 July 2014 to **withdraw the existing controlled assessment tasks and will be replacing them for the next academic year on Interchange by 15 September 2014.**

To avoid penalising the vast majority of hard-working students and teachers, those candidates who have completed or just started their controlled assessment tasks who intend to certificate in June 2015 will still be able to submit their work. Schools and colleges will be asked to submit the names of their candidates and the tasks for each unit by the end of September 2014, and we will be in touch shortly with further details. OCR's examiners will be extra vigilant when overseeing the marking process and will use a range of tools to ensure that no candidate has gained an unfair advantage.

We apologise for the disruption caused by this decision, and for an earlier communication posted in error on our website before a decision was reached.

We hope that these Frequently Asked Questions help you with the queries you may have. If you need any further assistance, please contact the Customer Contact Centre on 01223 553998.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will my candidates be penalised if they are planning on making entries in June 2015 and have already completed the now withdrawn controlled assessment tasks?

A: No. Those candidates who have completed or just started (this includes planning and preparation time) their controlled assessment tasks who plan to certificate in June 2015 will still be able to submit their work as per the normal process. OCR's examiners will be extra vigilant when overseeing the moderating process, but this will not penalise candidates who have not committed malpractice.

Q: Do I need to send the controlled assessment tasks to OCR in September 2014 for those candidates we plan to enter in June 2015?

A: No. We will be in touch in shortly via email to ask you for the details of candidates and the details of the controlled assessment tasks that have been started or completed using the now withdrawn tasks. You will not have to send the controlled assessment tasks in early and will need to complete internal marking as per the normal procedure.

Q: I have not yet made entries for June 2015. Can I still submit the now withdrawn controlled assessment tasks?

A: If the tasks have already been started or completed, you should make entries for the June 2015 series in the usual way. The deadline for entries is 21 February 2015. We will be in touch shortly via email to ask you for the details of candidates and the details of the controlled assessment tasks that have been started or completed using the now withdrawn tasks.

Q: How will you communicate with our centre?

A: We will send e-alerts to your centre's email address. We will update Interchange and the OCR website at <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-computing-j275-from-2012/>. We will also include notices in the monthly Subject Information Update email.

Q: My candidates have not started any assessment tasks yet. What do I do?

A: Your candidates should wait and complete the new controlled assessment tasks which will be uploaded onto Interchange by 15 September 2014. We will confirm the topic areas for the new tasks by 11 July 2014 through the OCR website, Interchange and by email.

Q: I'm planning to make June 2015 entries for these units and have not received any emails from OCR regarding this issue.

A: Please let us know by emailing cast@ocr.org.uk and we will add you to our mailing list.

Q: What details will you need from our centre?

A: We will be in touch via email with the details about the information we need by 11 July 2014, with a response expected from centres by the end of September.

Q: My school is closed. How can I respond with the details you request?

A: The deadline for a response will be the end of September 2014. This should give you enough time to send in this information.

Q: What will happen if I forget to respond to your request?

A: OCR will not accept controlled assessment based on the now withdrawn tasks in the summer 2015 series unless we have had prior confirmation that the candidate has started working on a now withdrawn task. It is therefore essential that you respond to our request.

Q: My candidates are doing a three year GCSE – which controlled assessment tasks should they complete?

A: For those candidates completing a three year GCSE, we will accept the now withdrawn tasks from those certificating in June 2015 **and** June 2016 if the tasks have been started. If the tasks have not yet been started, the candidates should complete the new controlled assessment tasks.

For those candidates completing a one year GCSE and for those candidates completing a two year GCSE, we will accept the now withdrawn tasks from those certificating in June 2015 if the tasks have been started. If the tasks have not yet been started, the candidates should complete the new controlled assessment tasks.

For those candidates completing a two year GCSE certificating in June 2016, we will **not** accept the now withdrawn tasks.

Q: If my candidates have started one of the three now withdrawn tasks for Unit A453 and have finished one subtask of the three, do I carry on with the other two subtasks?

A: Yes, please continue with the task and submit all three subtasks.

Q: When will you provide us with the new controlled assessment tasks?

A: The new tasks will be uploaded onto Interchange by 15 September 2014. We will confirm the topic areas for the new tasks by 11 July 2014 through the OCR website, Interchange and by email.

Q: Why can you not provide the new controlled assessment tasks sooner?

A: Producing tasks that are fit for purpose takes time and involves a number of checks and balances. These tasks cannot be produced any quicker.

Q: Can you reassure me this will not happen again?

A: The tasks which will be released in September 2014 can be completed by candidates certificating in June 2015 or June 2016, but not beyond. We will release new tasks in June 2015 for candidates certificating in June 2017. OCR cannot prevent people uploading exemplars to the web in the future, but we will monitor this. We will refresh the tasks every two years to ensure the impact of this type of malpractice is minimised, and will ensure that malpractice is picked up through moderation.

Q: As a teacher, how can I ensure I pick up plagiarism and malpractice?

A: OCR will be in touch next term with some further guidance on how you can spot malpractice and plagiarism.