

## Resource issues/network restrictions/software issues

As this is a vocational qualification it is important that candidates are able to make use of a range of features that might be blocked by a school network but which are standard tools used in the workplace.

**All** Pass requirements must be met.

Possible strategies:

1. Ask why the restriction is in place. Is it for the benefit of the school, the candidates and the learning environment? If it is not, then maybe the restriction should be reconsidered.
2. Is there an alternative method?
  - although files might not be able to be password-protected from the operating system, candidates might be able to do it from the options on the Save menu within applications
  - there are many different ways of creating shortcuts. Sometimes a network will allow you to drag an icon from the **Start** menu.
3. Can the restriction be lifted for certain candidates at certain times? For example, allowing a group to access the OS find facility at a particular time would allow teaching of an important tool in a monitored environment.
4. Consider alternative ways of allowing candidates to learn these skills and create evidence of using them. Most teachers can demonstrate using a staff laptop operating as a stand-alone machine.
  - a significant number of candidates would then be able to obtain evidence of using these skills from home – teachers might just need to ask for a few additional 'how' screenshots and have a short conversation with the candidates to authenticate this work.
  - other candidates could be allowed access to a staff laptop or an old machine, removed from the network, to carry out the few tasks that cannot be done on the network.

### Software issues

OCR receives many requests for advice on whether certain software applications are suitable for a particular unit. The advice that is always given is that the centre which proposes to deliver the unit should check themselves that all aspects of the unit and grade requirements can be met using the resources and facilities available. In some cases this will necessitate the purchase of suitable software or additional hardware.

A useful source of advice is often the ICT Nationals forum where over a thousand members share ideas and good practice. A request posted on the forum will often generate numerous responses offering advice and directing to useful online resources.