What is controlled assessment?

Controlled assessment replaced coursework for all GCSE subjects from September 2010. Some subjects (e.g. Maths and Religious Studies) have no controlled assessment at all. It is intended to ensure the validity and reliability of coursework and to enable assessors to confidently authenticate candidates’ work.

How does controlled assessment work?

Controlled assessment is split into three stages: task setting, task taking and task marking. For each, a level of control will be set, either high, medium or low. Each stage can have a different level of control and each subject will have its own set of controls.

<table>
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<th>CONTROLLED TESTING: LEVELS OF CONTROL</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TASK SETTING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>High Control: Exam boards set the tasks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium Control: The centre or exam board set the tasks. If the centre set the tasks then the exam board will give criteria (rules) for the centre to follow.</td>
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| Low Control: The task is set by the centre, but the exam board provides exemplars. | Low Control: Limited supervision. Work may be completed outside of the classroom without direct supervision. | |}

Individual subject specifications give specific details about which tasks are high, medium and low control. Your son / daughters teachers will inform them which tasks are to be completed in high, medium or low control conditions.

Where will controlled assessments take place?

Controlled assessment is designed to take place within the normal teaching timetable, for example in the classroom, lab or workshop.
Levels of controlled assessment

The level of controlled assessment varies between GCSEs

0%  In the following subjects there will be no controlled assessment: Religious Studies and Mathematics

25%  Subjects with 25% controlled assessment include: Business Studies, English Literature*, Geography, History, Science

40%  Subjects with 40% controlled assessment include: English and English Language

60%  Subjects with 60% controlled assessment include: Art and Design, Citizenship, Design and Technology, Drama, Health and Social Care, Home Economics, French, German, Music, Physical Education

As a parent what can I do to help my son/daughter fulfil his/her potential in the controlled assessments?

It is important that your son/daughter is present in class for each of the elements of the controlled assessment. If absence is totally unavoidable there will be an opportunity to catch up, but many of these assessments rely on the teaching in the periods leading up to them, and it would not be possible to re teach the material.

Help with the dates and deadlines. Discuss the particular set of dates for your child and help ensure time is available around particularly busy periods. Enter these periods on the family calendar and try to take this into account, for example by avoiding planning a major family event at the same time. It will be especially important to keep pupil absence from school to an absolute minimum during the period of these assessments.

How long should my son/daughter spend preparing for tasks?

Limits are set on preparation time allowed in school and pupils will be guided by their subject teachers as to how long they should be spending on research and preparation at home. Preparation will be important of course but it would be a mistake to over prepare at the expense of other aspects of the course or other subjects. If students are absent for preparation time then we will endeavour to support them in making up time but this cannot be guaranteed in all cases.

When will controlled assessments be completed?

The controlled assessment timetable for the next two years will be available on the school website. This is to help avoid overload and clashes. However, the nature of controlled assessment means that while it is possible to identify windows of time, the specific dates need to be flexible enough to accommodate fluctuations in pupil progress and other school
events. Pupils will be given plenty of information from departments with regards the scheduling and requirements of all controlled assessments.

**What if my child is absent from School during a controlled assessment?**

Excellent attendance at school is vital throughout Years 10 and 11. It is especially important during periods of controlled assessment. Whilst every effort would be made to help your child catch up, depending on the nature of the task set and the degree of supervision needed, it may not be possible to make up the time.

**Tips For Pupils**

1. Make the most of the teaching and learning phase (i.e. lessons which deal with the topic in general terms). If you have a good grasp of the general concepts and of the material you will inevitably do better with any form of assessment.

2. Confirm with your teacher the date on which assessments will be set and the dates of the write up sessions.

3. Start the preparation work as soon as it is set. Do not put it off. You will have a limited period in which to prepare.

4. Make sure you know exactly what is required, including content required for a high mark, length and how to present it. This will vary from subject to subject. If you have any concerns over time allocated for completing the preparation, please speak to the teacher or the Head of the Department concerned.

5. Ask for the Examination Board’s mark scheme, if permitted. Make sure you will be in a position to do what is needed to attain a high mark on the day of the assessment.

6. **DO NOT INFRINGE THE RULES GOVERNING PLAGIARISM** (copying). All work must be your own and use of other sources must be acknowledged. If you fall foul of this, the consequences can be very severe indeed.

7. Do not include material which will not gain you credit. Quality, not quantity is the important thing. You must keep a clear focus on the expectations of the task.

8. Ask your teacher for advice and check each section as you complete it, if this is allowed. Generally speaking you are not allowed to produce a draft for checking but work with your teacher all the way through.

9. There will be times when you find yourself preparing for assessment in a number of different subjects but you need to remember to look after yourself too. If you plan ahead and do tackle the tasks in an organised way, this should be possible for you. You don’t have to give up all the things you enjoy doing outside school but you will
need to plan your time carefully. Don’t forget the basics – eating well, getting plenty of sleep and asking for support from family and friends when you need it.

10. Lastly, do not spend so long preparing for assessments that other aspects of the subject or other subjects suffer as a result. Keep a sense of proportion and check how many marks are involved. Once you are fully prepared and have done thorough research, then you need to keep a clear head for the assessment itself. You will need to continue to work on all subjects and cannot afford to neglect those which are assessed in a different way.

If you have any questions or concerns about the assessments, please contact, Ms Rutherford, (Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum), Mr Shaw (Assistant Headteacher, ) or for subject specific enquiries, your child’s subject teacher or the relevant Head of Department.

**Use of ICT and Security of Students Work**

If ICT use is permitted during controlled assessment students are not permitted to access their work between controlled assessment sessions.

**COURSEWORK - AVOIDING PLAGIARISM**

This guidance is intended to help you understand what is meant when, in the official JCQ Guidelines, you are told

The work which you submit for assessment must be your own.

In particular, this guidance should help you understand and avoid plagiarism, which is something you must avoid in examination coursework.

This guidance is intended to apply to controlled assessment, but it may also be useful in the context of other essays and project pieces set by your teachers. Although references throughout are to written pieces, similar principles apply to controlled assessment that takes other forms, such as practical activity or production of an artefact.

**How much feedback can be given to students during the controlled assessment period?**

This depends on the level of control for the relevant stage of the assessment.

For subjects with high level of control (formal supervision), no teacher guidance is permitted.

For subjects with medium level of control (informal supervision), teachers can provide students with oral and written advice at a general level only. Students can revise work before submitting the final piece. Teachers must not provide specific advice on how to improve drafts to meet assessment criteria. There should be no detailed feedback on errors/omissions.
What reference materials are allowed during the controlled assessment sessions?

This will vary according to the subject. During high control sessions, the use of reference material is tightly controlled but there may be some differences across subjects.

For subjects with medium level of control (informal supervision), students may have access to any print/electronic resources that are available within the centre.

Further guidance is available via the relevant specification.

Should marking criteria be shared with students?

Yes. Students should be aware of the marking criteria.

If a student resits a controlled assessment task will he or she need to do a different assignment?

Yes. A student can resit a controlled assessment task, as long as the set task is still current for the resit year. However, work presented for the resit assessment must be new work. Students cannot present amended work that has previously been submitted.