

Regulations for the Conduct of Synoptic Project

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These Regulations **must** be used for all NCFE Combined L1/L2 Technical Awards with an Internally Assessed Synoptic Project.

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Section 1

Overview of Regulations

This document provides instructions on the correct administration of the Internally Assessed Synoptic Project element of the NCFE Combined L1/L2 Technical Awards where assessments and associated grading descriptors are provided by NCFE.

The Regulations do not in any way affect the responsibility of the Centre for health, safety and safe working under current legislation and local government by-laws, therefore ensuring the integrity and security of the assessment is maintained at all times. Failure to comply with these Regulations will be addressed via our Maladministration and Malpractice Policy.

1.1. Responsible/Designated Person

- Responsible Person - The Head of Centre is responsible to NCFE for making sure all synoptic projects are conducted in line with these Regulations.
- Designated Person - The Head of Centre must delegate a member of staff to be the designated person to carry out the administration of the assessments in line with these Regulations.
- The Head of Centre must not appoint themselves as the designated person. These roles are distinct and intended to be separate.

1.2 What is the Synoptic Project?

- The Synoptic Project is an internally graded non-examination assessment that measures subject-specific knowledge and skills that cannot be fully assessed by timed written examinations. It is a form of controlled assessment.
- Controlled assessment is a form of internal assessment in which control levels are set for each stage of the assessment process:
 - task setting
 - task taking
 - task marking
- Task setting: high control:
 - The Synoptic Project is set by NCFE. Centres must not design their own projects and tasks or adapt the ones supplied

- Task taking: medium control:
 - Centres must ensure there is formal supervision of every learner to enable work to be authenticated and ensure work is completed under the required conditions
 - Learners may complete tasks in the usual classroom setting and may carry out research from a range of published sources, including the internet.
 - Learners may use their research notes to support them in completing the Synoptic Project. Learners may also have access to teaching and learning materials however, these cannot be submitted as evidence.
- Task marking: medium control:
 - Centres must use the grading descriptors and marking guidance provided by NCFE to assess the learners work
 - The teacher assumes the role of Assessor during the project and must not lead on the completion of any tasks or provide any feedback or guidance on how to complete the tasks to the learner whilst they complete their project.
 - The teacher can provide guidance on Health and Safety, available time remaining and the use of any technical equipment.

1.3 Who should read these Regulations?

To ensure the Regulations are correctly applied, they should be read and referred to by:

- The Head of Centre, Chief Officer of an institution or Chief Executive of a company (Responsible Person - see [Section 1.1](#))
- Members of the Senior Leadership team
- The Examinations Officer or Quality Assurance Co-ordinator appointed by the Head of Centre (Designated Person – see [Section 1.1](#))
- Curriculum Manager/Course Tutor responsible for learners undertaking the assessments
- Tutor/Teachers/Assessors delivering NCFE qualifications
- Supervisors for all NCFE assessments.

Section 2

Quality Assurance

2.1 Maladministration/Malpractice

If at any time during the assessment there is a violation of these Regulations, the Supervisor or Designated Person has the right to void the assessment immediately. This decision must only be made in exceptional circumstances where malpractice is irrefutable. Once voided no allowance can be given retrospectively if the decision is deemed invalid. If they do so they must also inform NCFE immediately with a report of what occurred – please see our Notification of Malpractice form available on our website www.qualhub.org.uk. If any of these Regulations are breached by a learner, Supervisor, or other person(s) involved in the conduct of the assessment, then NCFE may declare the assessment void.

In the event of a suspected or actual breach of these Regulations by learners:

- the work completed by the learner(s) concerned and any unauthorised materials (if applicable) must be confiscated from the learner and given to the Designated Person to return to NCFE
- all learners suspected of breaching these Regulations should be instructed to leave the room immediately if appropriate to do so, causing the least amount of disruption to other learners
- the Supervisor should report the incident to the Designated Person as soon as possible
- NCFE should be informed immediately of any irregularity
- the Centre should conduct its own investigation into the incident and report the incident and their findings to our Quality Assurance team using the NCFE Notification of Malpractice document on our website.

NCFE reserves the right to investigate each case of alleged or actual maladministration/malpractice committed by a learner, Supervisors or other person(s) involved in the conduct of the assessment in order to establish all of the facts and circumstances surrounding the case. The investigation will be carried out in accordance with NCFE's Maladministration and Malpractice Policy.

2.2 Ownership of Assessment Material

All assessment material remains the property of NCFE.

Section 3

Preparing for the Synoptic Project

3.1 Accessing the Assessment Materials

The Synoptic Project will be made available electronically by NCFE in December. Whilst the project is live it will only be accessible by a password. The password will be made available to Centres who have learners completing the Synoptic Project that year. The live project cannot be used as a sample. Only the sample materials on the QualHub may be used for practice synoptic project assessments, these will be updated annually on QualHub.

3.2 Reasonable Adjustments

NCFE seeks to provide equal access to assessment for all learners registered for its qualifications. NCFE recognises that reasonable adjustments may be required for assessments, and information is available in our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy and guidance on our website. This will be reviewed on your EQA visit.

3.3 Status in Wales and Northern Ireland

NCFE qualifications have been regulated for use in either England, Wales and/or Northern Ireland. Currently NCFE provides qualifications to Centres in England and Qualification Specifications and assessment materials are in English. These materials can also be made available in Wales and Northern Ireland. NCFE is able to provide Qualification Specifications and assessment materials in Welsh and/or Irish (Gaelic) where requested and appropriate.

If a Centre requests an assessment in Welsh or Irish (Gaelic), NCFE will ensure that the assessment will be translated into Welsh or Irish (Gaelic) by a professional translation agency, which can currently take up to 4 months. These requests should be made using the form on QualHub.

3.4 Planning the Synoptic project

Each subject specific Synoptic Project contains a mandatory completion time. Centres will need to plan the sessions to allow learners access to the full completion time available.

The assessment must not take place until the teaching and learning of all content from Units 1 and 2 has been delivered to learners.

3.5 Storing Assessment Materials

The Designated Person will be responsible for:

- the security and integrity of the assessment materials (eg, used/unused assessment materials, partially or fully completed learner work and the assessment documentation) at all times
- ensuring that assessment material is logged on receipt (when downloaded and printed) Centres must be able to demonstrate documentation of receipt, secure movement and storage of assessment materials
- storing the assessment material in a secure (locked) cabinet in a secure location. Access to this storage must be restricted to authorised personnel only
- ensuring that any unauthorised Centre personnel do not have access to the assessment materials or completed learner work

3.6 Preparing the Learners

Learners must be fully prepared for the assessment.

- The assessment must not take place until the teaching and learning of all content from Units 1 and 2 has been delivered to learners.
- The centre may provide guidance and support on planning and time management of a project.
- Centres must inform learners of:
 - the date, time and location of the assessment. A full list of dates must be provided if the assessment is delivered over multiple sessions, this must clearly state the final submission date.
 - the conditions under which their Synoptic Project assessment will be conducted
 - the resources they are required to bring to the assessment and what will be supplied by the Centre.

3.7 Accommodation

To ensure the assessment is administered correctly, the Designated Person is responsible for ensuring the allocated room is:

- suitable in terms of specialist facilities/resources (including computers and printers if applicable), where relevant
- as learners are allowed to use teaching and learning materials to complete their synoptic project there is no requirement to remove any wall displays
- stocked with appropriate stationery and any specified items required by learners, specific resource requirements may be discussed between the Teacher and Learner in order to ensure availability, the Teacher may not offer advice on what resources to select
- suitably quiet, undisturbed, with adequate space, heating, lighting and ventilation

All learners must be informed and aware of any relevant health and safety considerations that need to be complied with to ensure they carry out their work in a safe manner.

Learners must be supervised at all times to ensure health and safety practices are observed. Where learners are seen to be working in an unsafe manner, at the discretion of the teacher, the learner may be removed from the assessment and the remaining time rescheduled.

3.8 Use of Computers, Internet/Intranet and Electronic Devices

3.8.1 Use of Computers/Electronic Devices

Computers may be used during the Synoptic Project assessment. The Designated Person needs to:

- provide suitably trained Technical Assistants who are readily available in case of equipment malfunction only and have no other involvement with the assessment
- ensure any device used to complete the assessment is provided by the Centre
 - the device(s) must be free from any material/additional facilities that would give the learner an unfair advantage, eg, preloaded templates, retrievable information etc.
 - devices must not be borrowed from another learner during the assessment

3.8.2 Use of Internet/Intranet

Internet - access is allowed as part of the Synoptic Project assessment.

- Any information used from the internet must be appropriately acknowledged by the learner in their work
- The evidence must be the learner's own work
- Synoptic Project assessment material must not be uploaded onto any website which would make the material available in the public domain, this includes social networking sites
- Learners and Teachers must not discuss the synoptic project brief online or post any assessment material online until after the materials have been retired

Intranet – Intranet access is allowed during the assessment. If Learners are using the Intranet to store their work this should be in a secure way that only they may access. Learners must not store or post any assessment material on an unsecure publicly accessible area of the intranet.

Section 4

Administering the Synoptic Project

4.1 Requirements to Administer the Synoptic Project

The following requirements apply to administering The NCFE Synoptic Project:

- The learner may access teaching and learning material, including their own personal notes, to complete their Synoptic Project but no teaching and learning material may be submitted as evidence.
- All work must be completed within supervised timetables sessions and work **must not** be carried out at home.
- All work must be handed in at the end of the timetabled session and securely stored. Learners must not be able to access their work outside of the timetabled sessions and no work can be completed at home or in catch up sessions.
- Synoptic Project assessment content must not be altered in any way by the Centre
- Learners must have access to the appropriate resources required to complete the Synoptic Project for example research materials and specialist resources
- Instructions ([Appendix A](#)) must be read out to the learners prior to the Internal assessment
- **Supervisors must:**
 - remain alert and be able to observe all learners at all times.
 - report immediately any issues which may occur during the assessment to the Designated Person
- **Supervisors must not:**
 - leave the assessment room without another Supervisor being present
 - read or carry out any other activity unless stated within Regulations
 - comment or offer advice or feedback to the learner about their work
- Technical Preparation:
 - may need to be completed before the start of the assessment eg preparation of recording equipment, costumes, props, sets, make up, audio files etc.
 - cameras/microphones must be set up in a suitable place to ensure quality of recording. Assessors must be able to hear and see both the learner(s) and audience.
 - If particular technical tasks take a long period of time, such as laser cutting or firing a piece of pottery in a kiln, the time should not be deducted from the learner's assessment time.

4.2 Transportation of Assessment Materials

Synoptic Project assessment materials must be collected from their secure storage at the start of each timetabled session by the Supervisor.

Following each session the materials and any completed learner work must be returned to the secure storage.

4.3 Identification of Learners

It is essential that learners are identified prior to the assessment. Learners and Supervisors are required to sign declarations to confirm the authenticity of the work when the learner makes their final submission. This is to ensure authenticity and to prevent potential malpractice and maladministration. Learners must be made aware of the importance of this declaration and the impact this could have on their overall grade, if the evidence was found not to be the learners.

4.4 Administering the Supervised sessions

Supervisors must read out [Appendix A](#) at the beginning of every supervised session.

Prior to the first supervised session, the Supervisor should:

- ensure the learners have a list of all dates and times for the supervised sessions
- ensure that learners read the instructions in their Synoptic Project assessment.

For all sessions, Supervisors must:

- ensure that there are no distractions, as learners may produce practical work it is acceptable that they move around the classroom and may not work in silence
- ensure learners work independently to produce their Synoptic Project
- supervise the assessment to ensure compliance with these Regulations
- ensure that the assessment evidence is only completed during the assessment sessions. Learners should not save their work onto an electronic platform they are able to access between sessions.

During the supervised sessions:

- sessions must take place within the Centre and can be completed in the normal classroom environment
- Supervisors can discuss the following with the learners:
 - the conditions in which the assessment must be undertaken
 - where to save their electronic work and be able to access the secure storage medium
 - time management of the hours available
- Supervisors must prevent copying from or colluding with another learner. If any incident occurs, it must be reported to NCFE immediately in accordance with NCFE's Maladministration and Malpractice Policy which is available at www.qualhub.co.uk.

Following the supervised session, Supervisors must:

- securely package all assessment material before taking them from the location between assessment sessions. This includes any electronic storage devices
- ensure all assessment material is stored in the secure storage facility between assessment sittings.

Supervisors **must not**:

- give any feedback about a learner's individual work. Learners must independently decide how to approach the Synoptic Project and associated tasks. If a learner asks for advice on the completion of their project the Supervisor must remind them they must work independently and the work must be their own
- assess, grade or internally quality assure the learners' work
- lead on any of the tasks
- direct learners
- provide templates or writing frames for learners to complete
- take copies of learner work
- label or reference completed work on behalf of the learner

4.5 Referencing and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the work of another person without crediting the source. Our malpractice policy will be followed in all cases of plagiarism and where plagiarism has occurred, grading may be withheld or additional work may need to be submitted by the learner. Intent to commit plagiarism is an important factor when concluding if plagiarism has occurred; however, it is difficult to judge intent because accidental plagiarism is still considered as plagiarism.

We take the view that there is no intent to plagiarise if the issue can be defined as poor educational practice relating to deficiencies in knowledge and understanding of how to reference. This means that there are identifiable attempts to reference but they are not used correctly, resulting in an honest mistake.

Examples might include:

- reference to a source in a paragraph or section of text but it isn't clear which exact sentence the reference relates to, reference might be found at the start, middle, or end of a section in a confused mixture of the learner's own work and the sourced material
- not making it clear if sections with references are a direct quote or if the words have been paraphrased
- using partial or confused references such as naming the author but not the correct book references
- minimal references at Level 1 and 2, such as inserting a copy of a website URL or adding a simple reference/bibliography section at the end.

Poor educational practice and mistakes in referencing could negatively impact on the grade awarded but will not be considered as plagiarism. For more information and support regarding plagiarism, please see our website.

Section 5

End of the Synoptic Project

At the end of the assessment sessions, learners must be instructed to:

- stop writing/working
- check their personal details are correct and completed
- label their work (see [Section 5.1](#))
- hand all evidence to the Supervisor

After the final assessment session the learner may not have any further access to their Synoptic Project and it must be securely stored by the Assessor for marking.

5.1 Labelling of Work

All individual pieces of evidence produced/storage mediums and additional paper used by the learner during the assessments must be clearly labelled by the learner with:

- learner name
- task number.

5.2 Assessor Marking of Learner Evidence.

At the end of the Synoptic Project the Assessor will assess and grade all learner evidence for the full Synoptic Project in line with the grading descriptors provided by NCFE. The Assessor must use the relevant grading calculator to calculate the correct grade for each learner, this is available on the qualification page of QualHub.

The grades and any feedback must not be shared with the learner until the grades have been Internally Quality Assured. If the learner disagrees with the assessment decision you should direct them to your centre's appeals policy, in the first instance.

Grades for first submission must be submitted by the 31 March in order to ensure adequate time for an EQA visit if a resubmission is required.

****Guidance on marking and feedback can be found in the Synoptic Project Delivery Guidance for Centres.****

5.3 Issuing the Result

The Assessors grades will be Externally Quality Assured by NCFE. If the grades are signed off they will be 'banked' in the system by the EQA. If the grades are not signed off the centre will be given an action plan to carry out reassessment.

If you disagree with the outcome of your EQA visit you can follow NCFE's Enquiries and Appeals about Results and Assessment Decisions Policy.

5.4 Resubmissions

Learners are only permitted to have one resubmission, this must be a resubmission of the same Synoptic Project brief which they are permitted to rework. In the case of a resubmission learners will have access to the full 21 hours if required. The resubmission must take place in year as briefs are retired at the end of the year. Any resubmissions in the following year will be rejected.

Learners are allowed to make changes and improvements to their submission following first marking. If learners are accessing the second submission their grades must be submitted by 31 May in order to ensure adequate time for EQA to take place and that certificates can be claimed by 23 Aug for performance points.

Section 6

Contacts

If you have any queries about the content of these Regulations, please contact the External Quality Assurance Team

Email: ega@ncfe.org.uk
Telephone*: 0191 239 8000

NCFE
Q6, Quorum Business Park
Benton Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE12 8BT

*To continue to improve our levels of customer service, telephone calls may be recorded.

Appendices

Appendix A – Instructions for the Supervisor to read out before starting supervised sessions

The following should be read out at the beginning of each supervised session:

- I am now in the role of Supervisor for this assessment not your Teacher
- this Synoptic Project assessment consists of supervised assessments. You have a list of dates and times when the supervised sessions will take place.
- you must work independently and decide yourself how to approach the assessment task/s.
- read the “instructions for learners” in the Synoptic Project and make sure that you understand them
- you must decide yourself how to present your evidence. This must be the most appropriate method which will fit the requirements of the assessment task/s
- I cannot provide you with any feedback or help with any tasks.
- all the work produced for the Synoptic Project assessment must be your own
- all your evidence must be clearly labelled with your name
- you should not upload or share any work or evidence on any social media sites, or discuss with anyone