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to know.**

**Regulations for the Conduct of External
Assessment – V Certs**

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Section One

Introduction

This document is designed to assist centres in the correct administration of the external assessment component of NCFE V Cert qualifications. These regulations apply to all external assessments provided by NCFE for our V Certs and 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.

For other external assessments please refer to NCFE's Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment or Regulations for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment – Functional Skills which are available on NCFE's website www.ncfe.org.uk.

What's external assessment

To comply with the Department for Education (DfE) requirements for high quality, rigorous qualifications, NCFE have developed V Certs to include an element of external assessment, which is set and marked by NCFE.

Details of the external assessment requirements for each qualification are provided within the relevant Qualification Specification.

Requesting external assessments

The V Cert assessments are available at set periods (marking windows) and details of these marking windows can be found on our website www.ncfe.org.uk. Centres will be sent the external assessment when candidates have been entered for the chosen marking window. For information on entering candidates for the external assessment, please see the Qualification Specification and the Centre Support Guide.

Centres are free to choose the date, time and site of the timed external assessment(s) within the marking window. Candidates must be entered directly onto the NCFE Portal.

Please note: external assessment materials and Invigilators' Register(s) cannot be faxed or emailed; therefore centres should ensure that candidates have been entered 15 working days prior to the start of the required marking window which will

ensure assessment documentation is sent to the centre for the first day of the marking window. Entries made after this period will be charged a fast track fee.

Section Two

Candidates' work

All completed external assessment material remains the property of NCFE. Where applicable, if a V Cert assessment is marked in the centre by NCFE Examiners eg for qualifications such as NCFE's Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Art and Design, the centre must retain the work for 3 months after results have been released. This allows for any potential appeals from candidates and also for NCFE to have access to the work for a remark. Examples of candidates' work may be retained by NCFE for future use in standardisation exercises. Such work will be appropriately edited to ensure anonymity and may be used in the future as exemplars in training and guidance documents. In cases where the assessment is marked in the centre, NCFE Examiners will be required to take a sample of the completed external assessment material away with them for use at standardisation.

External assessment papers

External assessment documentation will be despatched to the named person designated by the centre when they enter their candidates for a selected marking window. The designated person will be responsible for the security and integrity of the external assessment material.

Every care will be taken by us to ensure that the external assessment material and Invigilators' Register(s) are correctly issued and safely received. NCFE will not be responsible for any loss that may occur after receipt at the centre. NCFE reserves the right to investigate any irregular circumstances regarding the security of external assessment materials. Photocopying and/or reproduction of the external assessment materials, is strictly forbidden under any circumstances.

Observation of external assessments

NCFE reserves the right to observe the external assessment process, without prior notification, to confirm that these regulations are being adhered to. A completed External Assessment Monitoring Visit Report will be made available to the centre. If an NCFE representative observes any malpractice or non-compliance with these Regulations, they have the right to declare the external assessment void. In such cases, the NCFE representative will report the incident to our

External Quality Assurance team who will arrange to carry out an investigation.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

NCFE seeks to provide equal access to assessment for all candidates taking its qualifications. NCFE recognises that reasonable adjustments or special considerations may be required at the time of the external assessment where:

- candidates have a permanent disability or specific learning needs
- candidates have a temporary disability, medical condition or specific learning needs
- candidates are indisposed at the time of the assessment.

In the cases of requests for external assessment materials to be made available in Braille, requests must be made at least 30 working days prior to the proposed marking window. In the cases of requests for modified external assessment materials, requests must be made at least 15 working days prior to the beginning of the agreed marking window. Please see NCFE's website www.ncfe.org.uk for a copy of the request form. For further information about these arrangements please refer to NCFE's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy on NCFE's website www.ncfe.org.uk or from our External Quality Assurance team.

Status in Wales and Northern Ireland

The V Cert qualifications have been regulated for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We're able to provide the Qualification Specifications and assessment materials in the Welsh and/or Irish language where requested and appropriate.

If a centre requests external assessment in Welsh or Irish, NCFE will ensure:

- that the assessment will be translated into Welsh or Irish (Gaelige) by a professional translation agency, which can currently take up to 4 months
- that the assessment produced by the candidate is translated into English by a professional translation agency for marking purposes. The translator will highlight any anomalies to NCFE. In such cases, the NCFE representative will report the incident to our External Quality Assurance team who will carry out an investigation.

All requests should be made in line with NCFE's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.

External assessment irregularities

If any of these regulations are broken by a candidate, Invigilator or other person involved in the conduct of the external assessment, then NCFE may declare the external assessment void. In the event of a suspected or actual breach of these Regulations by candidates:

- the work completed by the candidate(s) concerned must be confiscated
- all candidates suspected of breaching these Regulations should be instructed to leave the room immediately
- at the end of the external assessment the Invigilator must report all relevant facts on the Invigilator's Register
- the Invigilator should also indicate if the candidate was removed from the external assessment
- the Invigilator should also then report the incident to the Head of Centre
- the centre should conduct its own investigation into the incident and report the incident and their findings to our External Quality Assurance team.

NCFE will investigate each case of alleged or actual irregularity committed by a candidate, Invigilator or other person involved in the conduct of the external assessment in order to establish all of the facts and circumstances surrounding the case. This investigation may be carried out in accordance with NCFE's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, available from NCFE's website (www.ncfe.org.uk) or from our External Quality Assurance team.

Each case will be considered by NCFE on an individual basis in the light of all available information.

Failure to comply with these regulations may result in a centre's approved status being temporarily or permanently removed and/or candidates being withdrawn from the qualification.

Section Three

Centre responsibilities

Centres are responsible for:

- providing a named person who is responsible for co-ordinating the external assessment process
- entering candidates on the NCFE Portal prior to the beginning of the marking window
- informing candidates of the date, time and location of the external assessment
- ensuring candidates are aware of their candidate number
- providing suitably trained Invigilators for each external assessment and ensuring they are familiar with the content of these Regulations and any other specific Regulations for certain qualifications
- providing Invigilators with all resources and documents necessary for the conduct of the external assessment
- providing each candidate with a separate storage medium if they use a computer to complete the assessment. Alternatively, if space is provided on the centre's network, candidates must not be able to access the space outside of the timed sessions.
- maintaining the confidentiality of external assessments at all times
- ensuring that any unauthorised centre personnel does not have the opportunity to read the external assessment paper or completed candidate work unless they are acting as an authorised reader for candidates who require reasonable adjustments in line with NCFE's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- ensuring all external assessment material (used and unused), partially or fully completed candidate work, Candidate Front sheet and the Invigilators' Register are stored securely at all times
- ensuring the relevant external assessment material, partially or fully completed candidate work, Candidate Front sheets and the Invigilators' Register(s) are returned to NCFE within **one working day of the completed external assessment**. Any completed assessment material that is not received by the cut-off date specified in the marking window will be marked at NCFE's discretion. NCFE will investigate why the external assessment material has not been returned within this period. For qualifications which have an Examiner visit, such as NCFE's Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Art and Design, only the Invigilators'

Register(s) will need to be returned, as the marking of candidate work is carried out at the centre by NCFE. Centres must therefore ensure that all paperwork and completed candidate work is stored securely

- ensuring that no copies of completed assessment material are retained (with the exception of qualifications which require an Examiner visit, ie NCFE's Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Art and Design) in any form or under any circumstances and that no external assessment is tampered with
- making any application for reasonable adjustments for candidates within the timescales stipulated in NCFE's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- making Invigilators aware of any reasonable adjustment arrangements agreed for any candidate
- taking all reasonable precautions to ensure that only genuine candidates sit the external assessment
- taking all reasonable precautions that internet access is limited as identified in the external assessment instructions (as applicable).

Section Four

Invigilation:

Selection and number of Invigilators

Invigilators play a key role in the quality control of the external assessment process. They should be suitably trained and ensure they're familiar with these regulations and any other specific regulations for certain qualifications.

Invigilators must be appointed by centres and briefed on the requirements for the conduct of external assessments.

Invigilators must be suitably trained people whose integrity can be relied on. They act on behalf of the centre and the centre is responsible for their conduct. NCFE doesn't accept responsibility for the payment of fees or expenses to Invigilators.

No person may be appointed to act as sole Invigilator for an external assessment involving candidates who've been taught, assessed or moderated by that person.

No other person must be in the exam room unless carrying out an invigilation role. No support is allowed for candidates, unless they've applied for a specified reasonable adjustment, in line with NCFE policy.

When readers/writers are provided for candidates with reasonable adjustments requirements, an Invigilator must also be present. Readers/writers aren't allowed to act as Invigilators.

The minimum number of Invigilators required in each room used for the external assessment of candidates is:

- 1 Invigilator for 20 candidates or less
- 2 Invigilators for 21 to 40 candidates
- 3 Invigilators for 40 or more candidates

When there's only one Invigilator they must be able to summon assistance, without the need to leave candidates unattended, in case of emergencies eg an unwell candidate. The number of Invigilators must never fall below the minimum numbers specified

Under no circumstances should candidates be left unsupervised or unattended.

Invigilation: Instructions for Invigilators

Invigilation is the supervision of candidates during the external assessment process. They play a key role in the quality control of the external assessment process and are required to:

- arrive at the external assessment location in good time
- ensure that the room is set up in accordance with the guidelines in Section 5(b) of these Regulations
- ensure that where candidates need to save work electronically, they are able to access the secure area where their work will be saved
- ensure that the appropriate sections of Appendix A of these Regulations are read out to candidates prior to the external assessment
- distribute the external assessment material to candidates and allow time before the start of the external assessment for candidates to check their personal details on the Candidate Front Sheet
- advise candidates to read all instructions carefully
- provide candidates with additional materials if required
- be alert and observe candidates at all times during the external assessment. Invigilators must not read or carry out any other activities unless stated within the External Assessment Instructions document
- ensure that the external assessment is supervised continuously
- ensure that the length of time allowed for the external assessment does not fall short of the authorised time specified on the external assessment material to the detriment of candidates
- ensure that the length of time allowed for the external assessment does not exceed the authorised time specified on the external assessment (unless a Reasonable Adjustment request has been made)
- take any external assessment material and candidate work from any candidates who leave the external assessment location before the specified end of the external assessment
- report any unauthorised access to the internet outside of the limitations identified in the external assessment instructions
- collect in all external assessment material and candidate work at the end of the external assessment. For some

qualifications, some tasks must be collected in before others. This applies to the following:

- NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Business and Enterprise. Candidate's work for Task 1 of this assessment must be collected in after 1 hour. Candidates are not allowed to work on the task after this time. The work must be stored securely until it is sent off to NCFE for marking. Candidates have the remaining four hours to complete Tasks 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- ensure that each candidate's NCFE number is included on their Candidate Front Sheet and any additional work
- ensure candidates submit their signed Front Cover Sheet with their work
- check that the number of completed assessments submitted agrees with the names and number of candidates attending the external assessment
- complete the Invigilator's Register
- check that a candidate who sits an external assessment is the same person who has been entered for the external assessment
- securely package all external assessment papers and external assessment material before taking them from the external assessment location. This includes securely packaging material in between sessions (if the assessment is spread over more than one session).

If at any time there's a violation of these regulations during the external assessment the Invigilator has the right to void the external assessment immediately. 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.ncfe.org.uk.

Please note that if a candidate sits an external assessment in another candidate's name (whether this is intentional or not), this will be investigated in line with our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

It is acceptable for an Invigilator to validate a candidate who is known to them. If this is not possible then the candidate must provide identification to enable the Invigilator to verify their identity.

If identification is not possible due to religious garments being worn, eg a veil, then the candidate should be taken to a private location and respectfully asked to remove the garment so that identification can take place. Please ensure that you adhere to your appropriate guidelines in these circumstances. Once

identification has been confirmed, the candidate can put on the garment that was removed and return to the external assessment room and proceed with the external assessment. If the candidate is not comfortable in removing a garment to allow for a visual identification to take place, then the centre must use their professional judgment to verify the candidate's identity.

Section Five

The Conduct of the External Assessment: Before the external assessment

Upon receipt, the external assessment materials must be placed in a secure (locked) cabinet in a secure location until the day of the assessment. Access to this cabinet must be restricted to authorised staff only. If the materials are damaged in any way you'll need to inform your Centre Support Assistant straight away.

A copy of the External Assessment Instructions document should be given to each Teacher whose candidates are taking the assessment. This is to enable them to understand the instructions and regulations surrounding the external assessment before it starts. The External Assessment Instructions document is confidential and should be placed back into secure storage when the Teacher is not using it. The Invigilator will also need access to the External Assessment Instructions document during the timed external assessment period.

There is a separate External Assessment Instructions document per paper. It's important that you use the correct one. You will be sent this with the external assessment materials.

The external assessment material must only be given to the candidates at the beginning of the preparation period (if applicable) or, if there is no preparation period, at the beginning of the timed external assessment period. The centre should use the Invigilator's Register to confirm all relevant candidates have been entered. If any discrepancies or missing papers are identified, the centre should contact the Centre Support team immediately.

The external assessment materials must be collected from their secure storage at the start of the external assessment by the Teacher, if the assessment has preparation time included or by the Invigilator if there is no preparation time. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure safe transit of the external assessment materials to the nominated location. Required resources detailed in the external assessment, must be made available to candidates, and candidates must have been informed what they will need, or are allowed to bring.

Centres must ensure that a suitable room or studio and specialist facilities/resources, where relevant, are available for the external assessment. Candidates must be able to work with the equipment and materials with which they are accustomed, as far as permitted by the Regulations. The location must be suitably quiet, undisturbed, with adequate space, heating, lighting and ventilation.

Where the external assessment comprises practical tests or the use of equipment, eg computers, then an Assistant familiar with the equipment must be available. Assistants should be available in case of equipment malfunction only, and should have no other involvement with the external assessment. More than one external assessment may be held in the same room as long as this does not disrupt any candidate.

On the day of the timed external assessment the invigilator will:

- collect the materials and take them to the exam room/location
- set up the room correctly. In practical assessments, the normal teaching space may be used; however the Invigilator must ensure that candidates focus on their own work. In non-practical assessments the seating arrangements should prevent candidates from overlooking, intentionally or otherwise, the work of other candidates
- if candidates are working at drawing boards, easels or computer workstations, candidates should be arranged in an inward-facing pattern (or similar pattern) and each candidate should be seated at a separate desk, table or workstation
- place a sign outside of the exam room to indicate an external assessment is in progress
- ensure the exam room is free of all posters/materials that may be relevant to the external assessment
- ensure all candidates are able to see a clock without the need to turn around. This may not always be possible for practical based external assessments, however a clock must be visible in the room
- ensure start and finish times of external assessment are clearly displayed
- ensure stationery and any specified items are available to the candidates. All candidates must be informed of the items they'll need for the external assessment
- ensure the exam room is located in a suitably quiet and undisturbed location. Only candidates registered for the external assessment taking place and the Invigilator should be allowed in the room for the duration of the external assessment

- ensure the candidates are in the exam room at least 10 minutes before the start of the external assessment to allow time for the Invigilator to read out the generic instructions to candidates
- record a seating plan that follows the order of the names as stated on the supplied Invigilator's register. In the case of an investigation NCFE will ask for this information.

The Conduct of the external assessment:

The external assessment

For practical assessments, where candidates may need to collect materials etc, it's acceptable for candidates to carry out essential movement, providing they don't cause disruption to the external assessment.

Where internet access is allowed, it must be monitored and restricted as indicated in the External Assessment Instructions document.

At the Invigilator's discretion, candidates may be allowed to enter the room late within the parameters below, but no extra time may be given. Where a candidate has been allowed into the room after the start time, the external assessment material and candidate's work should be submitted in the usual manner and the full circumstances of the late arrival should be recorded on the Invigilator's Register.

For each timed examination session lasting 2 hours or more:

- candidates will not be permitted to enter the external assessment location later than one hour after the timetabled start of the assessment (even if the actual start time differs from that which was timetabled)
- candidates will not be permitted to leave the external assessment location during the first hour of the assessment

For each timed examination session lasting less than 2 hours:

- candidates will not be permitted to enter the external assessment location after half of the assessment time has passed
- candidates will not be permitted to leave the external assessment location before half of the assessment time has passed

If a candidate needs to leave the exam room temporarily because they're unwell or need to go to the toilet the Invigilator must ensure:

- they're accompanied by a member of staff
- they don't speak to anyone else
- they don't consult any notes
- they don't have access to a mobile phone or make any calls
- they don't breach the security of the external assessment

- the remaining candidates are not left unattended at any stage
- for the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Performance Skills, candidates may be required to leave the room for costume changes. Costume changes do not need to be invigilated.

Any disturbances during the external assessment must be detailed on the Invigilator's Register and NCFE notified immediately.

If an emergency occurs during the external assessment eg fire alarm, bomb warning etc you must ensure:

- the exam room is evacuated in accordance with the instructions of the appropriate authority
- candidates must leave the external assessment material in the room
- candidates are kept apart and unable to converse with each other
- candidates are unable to consult books, notes, mobile phones or internet.

If the above has been adhered to then the external assessment can be resumed and the full remainder of allocated time applied.

If the Invigilator believes, at any time, there's been a breach of the external assessment security then they must void the external assessment immediately and notify NCFE with full details.

The Conduct of the external assessment: **Completing the external assessment**

The Invigilator must remind candidates of time remaining at both 15 and 5 minutes from the end of the allocated time.

Upon the allotted time ending candidates must be told to stop writing or working, if candidates fail to do so they must be warned they face disqualification.

Candidates should be instructed to check their personal details are correct and completed.

Any extra sheets of papers that candidates have used must have their personal details written on and be securely attached to the candidate's work.

Any electronic files must be clearly labelled. If printouts are submitted, the Invigilator should check that each page of the printout can be identified on a candidate by candidate basis.

If the work produced is in electronic format, this should be saved using a file format as detailed in the External Assessment Instructions document. The files should be downloaded to a suitable medium and sent to NCFE for marking.

Candidates must remain seated and silent while the Invigilator collects all the external assessment material, only when all the paperwork is accounted for can candidates leave the room.

The Invigilator must complete the register, marking which candidates have attended and which didn't attend. They must also include any notes of incidents that may have occurred. The Invigilators Register of Candidates should be completed by the Invigilator for the timed external assessment period only. Please keep a track of how many hours each candidate has spent during the timed external assessment period and record this on the Invigilator's Register.

Work should be stored securely in between assessment sessions. No work should be altered or added to by the candidate outside of the sessions. The Invigilator must collect all external assessment materials before candidates leave the room to ensure that no candidate takes their work with them.

*At the final timed external assessment session, the Invigilator must place all external assessment materials into the envelopes supplied, as per assessment instructions, and seal envelopes before leaving the exam room.

Envelopes should be returned to the designated address by special delivery/secure courier within 24 hours of the external assessment taking place.

If for any reason there's a delay to the above step NCFE must be notified immediately and all paperwork must be stored in locked secure storage.

Under no circumstances should the centre staff copy any of NCFE's external assessment paperwork during the marking window.

*For qualifications which require an Examiner visit, such as NCFE's Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Art and Design, only the Invigilators' Register(s) must be returned, as the

candidates' work will be marked at the centre by NCFE. All of which must be stored securely.

The Conduct of the external assessment:**Cancelling/postponing external assessment**

If centres decide to cancel the external assessment for the chosen marking window, NCFE must be informed immediately and all paperwork returned unopened, within 24 hours of the cancellation, by special delivery/secure courier.

If you wish to transfer to a different marking window you must consult your Centre Support Assistant immediately and they'll explain the options available to you.

Failure to do so would be a breach of the regulations.

Appendices

Appendix A

Instructions for Invigilator to read out before starting the external assessment

These instructions should be read out at the beginning of each timed examination session.

- Please check that your personal details appear on your Candidate Front Sheet/Candidate Answer Booklet and inform me/us (Invigilators) immediately if any detail is incorrect. This information should be pre-printed on the Candidate Front sheet. If this information is not pre-printed please complete by hand
- Read the “General instructions for candidates” in the assessment paper and make sure that you understand them
- Read each task carefully and attempt to complete all parts of the task as instructed in the external assessment
- Please ensure that your responses are clear and legible
- Do not begin your assessment until I/we instruct you to do so
- You must not have any notes, books, dictionaries or other information with you unless it is specifically allowed by the rules of the external assessment. If you have brought anything into the room you must give it to me/us before the external assessment begins
- You must not use the internet unless it is specifically allowed by the rules of the external assessment.
- Mobile phones, pagers and other means of communication are not allowed in the external assessment. If you have brought these into the room they must be switched off and placed in your bag. Bags, coats and any other belongings should be left at the front of the room. For the NCFE Level

2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Performance Skills,
specific props may be required

- You must not communicate with anyone other than me/us in any way. If you have any problems and need to speak to me/us, please raise your hand to attract my/our attention. Do not make a noise or distract other candidates, in the case of the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Performance Skills, candidates are permitted to communicate with each other if they're carrying out a group performance
- If you need to collect materials etc, its acceptable for you to do so, but please do not distract other candidates
- I/we will not be able to explain the tasks; I can however give you technical assistance eg if there is a power failure or your computer crashes etc
- There must be no eating, drinking or smoking during the external assessment
- If you finish your work and wish to leave, please raise your hand and I/we will check the time before giving you permission to go. Please leave as quietly as possible, so as not to disturb other candidates. Make sure that you have left your work behind. Please note that you will not be able to return to the room. For the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Performance Skills, it may not be appropriate for the candidates to leave until the performance has finished
- By starting the external assessment you are agreeing that you have understood and accepted these rules

- **For the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Business and Enterprise only**

You have up to 1 hour to complete Task 1.

After 1 hour you'll hand in your response to Task 1 and you will not be able to work on it again.

You have 4 hours to complete Tasks 2, 3, 4 and 5. After 4 hours you'll hand in your response to Task 2, 3, 4 and 5 and you will not be able to work on them again.

Appendix B**Additional information relating to the NCFE Level 2
Certificate in Creative Studies: Performance Skills**

For the above qualification, Task 3 does not need to be sat under invigilated conditions. The supervisions conditions as detailed on Page 4 of the External Assessment Instructions document must be followed for Tasks 1, 2 and 3.

Task 4 and 5 do need to be invigilated in accordance with these Regulations.