

For the attention of the  
key skills co-ordinator

City & Guilds

Issue 10 – August/September 2005

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## Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4  
Scheme numbers 3638, 3618 and other City & Guilds schemes that include access to key skills qualifications

This special double-issue of key skills news contains the following:

- 2000-specification portfolio components removed from 3638  
\*\***IMPORTANT CHANGE - IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED**\*\*
- key skills pricing for 2005-06
- Communication level 2 logbook – new wording for C2.2
- new proxy qualifications for ICT
- data files for 2005-06 ICT level 3-4 tests
- new DfES/QCA/LSC key skills policy and practice document
- wider key skills Part A affirmation/questioning and example portfolios

'Key skills news' contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds. It is normally published every month, although this double edition covers August and September. All previous editions can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

## 2000-specification portfolio components removed from 3638

As you may be aware, both the 2000 key skills specifications and 2004 key skills standards can be accessed via Award (complex) number 3638-01. This was set up to enable candidates registered before the 2004 standards took effect the opportunity to switch to the new qualifications without re-registering. It also meant that the Award number used to register most key skills candidates did not change when the 2004 standards were introduced.

A new set of component numbers (beginning with a '1') was introduced at the time to differentiate between '2004' and '2000' portfolio achievement. We reiterated the importance of claiming the correct component numbers for the 2000 specifications or 2004 standards in Issue 09 of *Key skills news*.

As a further step, we will be simplifying the range of component numbers available within scheme **3638** from **1 September 2005**. Given that the vast majority of key skills candidates have now migrated to the 2004 standards, this will hopefully assist with key skills administration and reduce the potential for confusion. The changes are outlined in full on the following page:

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Key skills news...



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1. The 2000-specification portfolio component numbers (eg 002 for Communication at level 1) will be made inactive on our systems within the 3638 scheme and **it will no longer be possible** to submit claims for these components via the Walled Garden or EDI.
2. 3638 candidates registered before 31 August 2004 **will still be able to claim certification** under the 2000 key skills specifications where centres request this. Centres will need to submit these results on a **Form S**, though must also complete the attached declaration form; special arrangements will then be made to process the results.
3. If any of these candidates are entitled to proxy exemption from the key skills test for the qualification(s) they have completed to the 2000 specifications, this should be claimed **at the same time**. If the candidate is entitled to a *portfolio* proxy (for ICT or for Application of Number at level 3) this should be claimed in the normal way using the 2004-standard component numbers (606, 612 etc).
4. All candidates in **Wales** registered via 3638-01 before 31 August 2004 were automatically given an additional free registration under 3638-13 to enable them to access the 2004 standards under the Welsh assessment arrangements. The above procedure should be followed for any candidates originally registered via 3638-01 or 3638-90 still needing to claim certification under the 2000 specifications.

Note candidates in Wales still require a test pass (or a valid/current proxy qualification) for certification under the 2000 specifications, although no key skills tests have been available to centres in Wales since January 2005. Tests are only not required for certification if working to the 2004 standards.

5. Candidates registered for key skills via scheme **3618** can continue to claim 2000-specification portfolio components up until 31 August 2006 and are **unaffected** by this change. These candidates can only access the 2004 key skills standards if **re-registered**. The new registration must be made via 3638-01 if the centre is in England or Northern Ireland; if the centre is in Wales the registration needs to be made using 3638-12 or 3638-13.

Note these changes do not affect the operation or entry procedure for any of the key skills tests. The tests are the same whichever key skills specifications/standards candidates are working to.

We would strongly encourage any 3638-01 candidates not already working towards the 2004 standards to consider doing so. The new standards are less prescriptive, and are expressed in clearer language, but with very little substantial difference in what is actually required. Our new key skills logbooks contain Part A coverage checklists as well as re-designed evidence record sheets; they can be downloaded free of charge from our **key-skills.org** site. Any candidates registered after 1 September 2004 must be assessed using the 2004 standards.

Pages 69 (England and Northern Ireland) and pages 70-71 (Wales) of the City & Guilds key skills centre guide contains more background information about the 2000-2004 transition arrangements.

For the avoidance of any doubt, the complete list of 3638 components being removed from the Walled Garden after 31 August 2005 is shown below. The 'equivalent' number for recording achievement under the 2004 standards appears alongside each component:

Component	Title	'Equivalent' 2004 component in 3638-01 *
002	Communication level 1 portfolio 2000	102
004	Application of Number level 1 portfolio 2000	104
006	Information Technology level 1 portfolio 2000	106
008	Communication level 2 portfolio 2000	108
010	Application of Number level 2 portfolio 2000	110
012	Information Technology level 2 portfolio 2000	112
014	Communication level 3 portfolio 2000	114
016	Application of Number level 3 portfolio 2000	116
018	Information Technology level 3 portfolio 2000	118
020	Communication level 4 portfolio 2000	120
022	Application of Number level 4 portfolio 2000	122
024	Information Technology level 4 portfolio 2000	124
026	Working with Others level 1 portfolio 2000	126
028	Improving Own Learning and Performance level 1 portfolio 2000	128
030	Problem Solving level 1 portfolio 2000	130
032	Working with Others level 2 portfolio 2000	132
034	Improving Own Learning and Performance level 2 portfolio 2000	134
036	Problem Solving level 2 portfolio 2000	136
038	Working with Others level 3 portfolio 2000	138
040	Improving Own Learning and Performance level 3 portfolio 2000	140
042	Problem Solving level 3 portfolio 2000	142
044	Working with Others level 4 portfolio 2000	144
046	Improving Own Learning and Performance level 4 portfolio 2000	146
048	Problem Solving level 4 portfolio 2000	148
504°	Application of Number level 1 portfolio 2000 (proxy)	n/a
506	Information Technology level 1 portfolio 2000 (proxy)	606
510°	Application of Number level 2 portfolio 2000 (proxy)	n/a
512	Information Technology level 2 portfolio 2000 (proxy)	612
516	Application of Number level 3 portfolio 2000 (proxy)	616
518	Information Technology level 3 portfolio 2000 (proxy)	618

\* Note the 2004-standard component numbers may **only** be claimed if assessment has taken place using the 2004 standards.

° Only one qualification has been approved as a **proxy** for both the Application of Number test and portfolio (AS Level in Use of Mathematics, awarded by Edexcel). This entitles full proxy exemption at level 3 (see Issue 09 of *Key skills news*). To avoid confusion, the level 1-2 AoN portfolio proxy components have been removed from our systems.

## Key skills pricing for 2005-06

The following fees will apply from 1 October 2005:

<b>England and Northern Ireland (3638-01)</b>	
<b>Transaction</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Registration (enables access to all six key skills at all four levels)	£6.20
Online test (L1-2)	£6.70
Dated paper test entry (L1-2)	£7.30
Dated paper test entry (L3-4)	£8.30
Portfolio ('main' key skills)	Nil
Portfolio (wider key skills)	£5.20
Proxy exemption fee	£3.10

<b>Wales (3638-12 and 3638-13)</b>		
<b>Transaction</b>	<b>Amount</b>	
	<b>3638-12</b>	<b>3638-13</b>
Registration (enables access to all six key skills at all four levels)	£20.80	£6.20
No tests apply		
Portfolio ('main' key skills)	Nil	£5.20
Portfolio (wider key skills)	Nil	£5.20
Proxy exemption fee	Nil	£3.10

## Communication level 2 logbook – new wording for C2.2

You may recall that we recently clarified the need to use both documents when summarising information to complete component C2.2 for Communication level 2 (see Issue 08 of *Key skills news*).

We have now amended pages 14-15 of our Communication level 2 logbook very slightly to make this clearer. The revised logbook (titled Version 2.0) is now available from our **key-skills.org** site in place of the original version.

## New proxy qualifications for ICT

QCA have announced that the following ICT qualifications will be added to the list of approved proxy qualifications from 1 September 2005:

- Edexcel Level 2 Award in Digital Applications for IT users (test and portfolio)
- Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Digital Applications for IT users (test and portfolio)
- Edexcel Level 2 Diploma in Digital Applications for IT users – (test and portfolio)
- OCR Level 2 Certificate for IT Users (CLAiT Plus) (test only)
- OCR Level 3 Certificate for IT Users (Advanced CLAiT) (test only).

The current list of approved proxy qualifications can be viewed at:

**[www.qca.org.uk/6446\\_1051.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/6446_1051.html)**. Please always ensure you are working from the most up-to-date list.

## Data files for 2005-06 ICT level 3-4 tests

QCA have recently refreshed the data files on its website so the appropriate files for all ICT level 3 and 4 tests up until September 2006 are now available. The files are located at [www.qca.org.uk/6445\\_1824.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/6445_1824.html)

You are reminded that **these files should be downloaded and stored locally well in advance of any tests taking place** so that candidates have adequate opportunity to become familiar with the forms of data used. Candidates should not know in advance of a test which particular set of files they will need to work with.

As in previous years we would urge you to archive all of your existing data files before attempting the download the new files as some may have common folder/file names.

## New DfES/QCA/LSC key skills policy and practice document

The 2005 edition of this document is now available to download from [www.qca.org.uk/4593.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/4593.html). We'll provide an overview of any significant changes in the next issue of *Key skills news*.

## Wider key skills Part A affirmation/questioning and example portfolios

Finally, a quick reminder that assessor guidance for the wider key skills Part A affirmation/questioning process is available to download from our [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site (see Issue 08 of *Key skills news*). Since the wider key skills are now being piloted as full qualifications, **all** candidates working to the 2004 standards must have their coverage of Part A explicitly affirmed.

The Part A affirmation/questioning process does not apply where candidates are still working to the 2000 specifications, although these can only be certificated as unit awards rather than full key skills qualifications.

We are awaiting advice from QCA about when pilot status will be lifted, and will inform you as soon as an announcement has been made.

Hard copies of the QCA-produced example portfolio documents for the wider key skills have now been sent to every approved City & Guilds key skills centre. PDF versions can be obtained from [www.qca.org.uk/6447.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/6447.html).

## Attached papers

- Key skills 2000 specifications – result submission special request for 3638 candidates.

More information about the key skills qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org)

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Issue 09 – July 2005

## Key Skills Qualifications

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This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Past level 1-2 test papers can now be retained
- Achievement under the 2004 standards  
– please make sure you're using the right component numbers
- Application of Number portfolio proxies – not to be confused with relaxations!

'Key skills news' is published every month and contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds. Previous editions can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

### Past level 1-2 test papers can now be retained

QCA have lifted the requirement that centres return or destroy all level 1-2 key skills and adult literacy/numeracy question papers after use. **It is now acceptable to retain them for practice purposes.**

We would nevertheless remind you that any live test materials must be stored securely and under no circumstances may the question papers ever be taken out of their sealed packets until immediately before use. Please contact our Customer Relations team (020 7294 2787) if additional packs are needed for multiple sites/locations.

A number of practice papers can be downloaded from our [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org) site, and we have also produced a limited number of practice tests (in executable and Flash format) designed to simulate the GOLA online testing environment. These are available to download from the key skills section on [SmartScreen.co.uk](http://SmartScreen.co.uk)

Key skills news...

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## Achievement under the 2004 standards

– please make sure you're using the right component numbers

You are reminded that new key skills portfolio component numbers were introduced within **3638-01** last September to identify portfolio achievement under the 2004 key skills standards rather than under the 2000 specifications.

These 2004 portfolio component numbers start with a '1' – eg **102** for Communication level 1 – and **must** be used if assessment has taken place using the 2004 standards.

The complete set of 2000 and 2004 portfolio numbers for 3638-01 are listed in the 3638 Directory pages; each component is now labelled either '2000' or '2004'. There is a further guide to the component numbering sequence on page 66 of the key skills centre guide.

The 2000-specification portfolio component numbers (002, 004, etc) may only be used where assessment has taken place using the 2000 key skills specifications. Only candidates registered **before** 1 September 2004 are entitled to access the 2000 specifications; on no account should these numbers be used for any candidate registered after that date.

Note in **Wales** (3638-12 and 3638-13) all 2004-standard portfolio component numbers start with a '2', eg **202** for Communication level 1. Centres in Wales may only use 3638-01 to submit 2000-specification portfolio claims on behalf of candidates registered **before** 1 September 2004 (see *Key skills news* Issue 06).

All City & Guilds key skills certificates now state whether candidates have achieved under the 2000 specifications or 2004 standards, so it is important to ensure that each portfolio claim accurately reflects what the candidate was assessed against. Please advise your local Regional/National City & Guilds office if you have inadvertently submitted any portfolio claims under the wrong component number.

## Application of Number portfolio proxies

– not to be confused with relaxations!

We reminded you in Issue 02 of *Key skills news* about the difference between proxy exemption and the relaxation arrangements within apprenticeships. You may recall that there is one AS Level (in Use of Mathematics) that entitles candidates to proxy exemption covering both the Application of Number test and portfolio at level 3. This is the only approved AoN portfolio proxy qualification and the **only valid reason** for claiming an AoN portfolio proxy component (ie 504, 510, 516, 604, 610 or 616).

**Since this proxy qualification entitles candidates to a full AoN level 3 certificate, we do not in practice expect to receive any claims for components 504, 510, 604 or 610!**

Proxy components must never be used to 'claim' relaxation from needing a key skill for apprenticeship framework completion. Candidates are only entitled to a key skills qualification certificate if they fulfil the assessment requirements for that qualification.

More information about the key skills qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org)

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Issue 08 – June 2005

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## Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4  
Scheme numbers 3638, 3618 and other City & Guilds schemes that include access to key skills qualifications

### This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Wider key skills Part A questions – assessment guidance now available
- Wider key skills example portfolios – an apology
- Reminder about this month's level 4 portfolio review panel
- Communication level 2 – clarifying C2.2

'Key skills news' is published every month and contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds. Previous editions can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

### Wider key skills Part A questions –assessment guidance now available

Guidance on planning and carrying out the Part A affirmation/questioning process is now available to download from our [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site. We've included clarification about how and when the questions should be used, as well as suggestions as to what assessors should be looking for in candidates' responses to each question.

We will shortly be carrying out an evaluation of the questions and questioning process and will be writing to centres about this shortly. If you do have any specific comments to make then please inform your external verifier or email us on [keyskills@city-and-guilds.co.uk](mailto:keyskills@city-and-guilds.co.uk)

### Wider key skills example portfolios – an apology

We had hoped to provide each active key skills centre with a set of example portfolio documents covering the wider key skills at levels 1-3, although there has been a delay in delivering these to our mailing house. We are working with QCA to resolve this, and will arrange for these to be delivered as soon as we are able to.

In the meantime, the example portfolio documents for all six key skills can be downloaded from [www.qca.org.uk/6447.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/6447.html)

Key skills news...

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The regulatory authorities (QCA, ACCAC and CCEA) have also been working with City & Guilds and a number of other awarding bodies to produce a set of integrated key skills portfolios. We will let you know likely timescales for availability as soon as we receive this information.

## Reminder about this month's level 4 portfolio review panel

Please be aware that **all** level 4 portfolios need to be submitted to one of our twice-yearly review panels before certification can be claimed. The next panel meeting is due to take place at the end of this month, so please contact us (using **keyskills@city-and-guilds.co.uk**) as soon as possible if you have any **completed level 4 portfolios that have been internally verified**. There will be a further panel meeting in the autumn if your candidates' work is not ready for review at this stage.

## Communication level 2 – clarifying C2.2

Please note that C2.2 requires candidates to have personally selected and read two documents, each of at least 500 words. These documents must relate to the same subject and can be used **together** in meeting the assessment criteria (ie one summary that selects relevant information from both documents).

We have become aware that the way pages 14-15 of our 2004 Communication level 2 logbook has been formatted could imply that the two documents have to be read and summarised in isolation. Assessors need to appreciate that this is **not** the case; when summarising, candidates must draw on the main points, ideas and lines of reasoning from both documents, although how this information is presented will depend on the purpose of the activity.

To eliminate any uncertainty about this, we intend to revise and re-publish the 2004 Communication level 2 standard and logbook document on our **key-skills.org** site over the summer. We will advise you via 'Key skills news' once this has been done.

The portfolio referencing assessor and internal verifier confirmation checklist for Communication level 2 (on pages 93-95 of the key skills centre guide) leaves less room for doubt about what the requirements are, although we would always advise assessors to consult the key skills qualifications standards and guidance document for a definitive answer.

More information about the key skills qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: **www.key-skills.org**

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## Key Skills Qualifications

**Levels** 1 to 4  
**Scheme numbers** 3638, 3618 and other City & Guilds schemes that include access to key skills qualifications

### This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Key skills paper test dates for 2005-06
- Faster results turnaround for level 1-2 paper tests
- Borderlining for level 3-4 test scripts
- Level 4 portfolio review panel – June 2005

'Key skills news' is published every month and contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds. Previous editions can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

### Key skills paper test dates for 2005-06

We're pleased to confirm that next year's paper test dates have now been finalised. City & Guilds will be offering paper test opportunities during the following months:

Month	Levels available
November 2005	1, 2, 3 and 4
January 2006	1, 2 and 3
March 2006	1, 2 and 3
May 2006	1, 2 and 3
June 2006	1, 2, 3 and 4
September 2006	1, 2 and 3

The actual dates for each series, together with entry closing dates and anticipated dates by which results will be available, are attached.

We last reminded you about the benefits of online testing in Issue 05 of *Key skills news*. The number of City & Guilds candidates taking key skills tests online each month has now overtaken the equivalent number of tests taken on paper. Although level 1-2 paper tests will continue to be available on fixed-dates for the foreseeable future, we will be offering slightly fewer test opportunities next year (six instead of eight).

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Key skills news...



If you're not already using the GOLLA testing system, please contact your local regional/national City & Guilds office for more information (or visit [www.city-and-guilds.co.uk/gola](http://www.city-and-guilds.co.uk/gola)).

Note centres in Wales are no longer permitted to access any key skills tests, even where candidates are still working to the 2000 specifications or where some of their candidates are based in England (see Issue 06 of *Key skills news*).

## Faster results turnaround for level 1-2 paper tests

Although pre-determined pass marks are used for the online key skills tests, the pass marks for fixed-date paper tests have tended not to be finalised until after the test has been taken. This has involved the participation of all key skills awarding bodies using the paper, and results have therefore taken slightly longer to issue than the usual timescales for City & Guilds' own multiple choice exams.

However, all of the level 1-2 paper tests we use from **May 2005** onwards will have pre-determined pass marks, which enables us to speed up result determination considerably. Initially this will mean that they are available in line with our Customer Charter (27 working days after the test date).

The current pattern of *post-hoc* awarding will continue to operate for all level 3-4 tests; results for these are normally available about nine weeks after the test date. We have included anticipated 'results available by' dates for 2005-06 on the attached list, and equivalent 2004-05 dates can be found in the 'Download information' section of our [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org) site).

## Borderlining for level 3-4 test scripts

As a reminder, all level 3-4 scripts that fall just short of the agreed pass mark are re-scrutinised by the chief examiner prior to results release.

This supplements the extensive process of cross-awarding body and internal marker standardisation that operates for the key skills tests, and is intended as an additional safeguard to ensure that candidates are not disadvantaged by any minor marking errors or finely balanced decisions where the benefit of the doubt could reasonably be given.

## Level 4 portfolio review panel – June 2005

Following the level 4 key skills portfolio review meeting held last November (see Issue 01 of *Key skills news*), we will be holding a further panel meeting towards the end of June.

Please be aware that level 4 key skills portfolios are no longer sampled during normal external verification visits or remote monitoring; **all** completed level 4 portfolios must be scrutinised at one of our twice-yearly panel meetings **before** certification can be claimed.

We will shortly be writing to key skills co-ordinators in all centres where we understand there to be any level 4 key skills candidates to outline the arrangements for sending in

portfolios for the June panel. Any portfolios submitted to the panel must be accompanied by internal verification records.

If you have not already done so, please advise your external verifier **as a matter of urgency** if you have any level 4 candidates.

## Attached papers

- Paper test dates 2005-06

More information about the key skills qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: **[www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org)**

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Issue 06 – April 2005

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## Key Skills Qualifications

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### This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Key skills in Wales – clarification for centres operating in both Wales and England
- DfES key skills completion data
- Key skills test pass marks and rates

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## Key skills in Wales – clarification for centres operating in both Wales and England

It may be helpful for us to clarify how the new assessment arrangements for key skills in Wales can be applied within centres that operate in both Wales and England.

Only candidates **registered by a centre in Wales** to access the 2004 key skills standards are covered by the Welsh Assembly Government's decision to discontinue the key skills tests. All other candidates completing the 'main' three key skills qualifications need to complete both the test and portfolio components for certification.

Where a centre based in England has some candidates being assessed at a separate site in Wales, it is necessary to set up a separate sub-centre number so these candidates can be clearly identified. The sub-centre can in these circumstances be given approval for 3638-12 and 3638-13, although will not be permitted to register any candidates under 3638-01 or make any key skills test entries.

All candidates registered by centres in Wales are covered by the Welsh assessment arrangements for key skills, even if being assessed at a site in England (and even if funded by LSC rather than ELWa). **No centre in Wales is permitted to register any new candidates under 3638-01 or make key skills test entries (online or paper based) for any candidate.**

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# Key skills news...



Even though the tests are no longer available to centres in Wales, candidates working to the **2000** key skills specifications still need a test pass (or a valid proxy qualification) for certification. Any candidates still needing to pass the test for a particular key skill they are working towards will need to achieve that qualification under the 2004 standards (see page 70 of the key skills centre guide for information about the 2000-2004 transition arrangements in Wales). The last certification date for achievement under the 2000 specifications is 31 August 2006.

## DfES key skills completion data

The Department for Education and Skills has now published a Statistical First Release covering all key skills qualifications awarded in England, Wales and Northern Ireland between October 2000 and September 2003 (replacing an earlier SFR covering qualifications awarded before September 2002). This data can be downloaded in various formats from [www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000459/index.shtml](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000459/index.shtml)

## Key skills test pass marks and rates

Information about the typical pass mark (the minimum number of marks needed to pass) for each key skills test can be found on page 47 of the key skills centre guide. The exact pass mark for each test varies slightly from paper to paper to take into account differences in the accessibility/difficulty of each question so that the overall level of demand is consistent.

All key skills awarding bodies use tests sourced from the same national bank, and all apply the same pass mark for each test irrespective of whether it is taken online or on paper.

We have recently been asked by a number of centres for benchmark information about the key skills tests. Although we do collate information about the candidates taking the tests with us, there are no 'national pass rates' that include data from all key skills awarding bodies.

It is important to remember that these are not 'end tests' – each test can be taken any number of times in the course of working towards a key skills qualification and candidates do attempt the tests at varying stages of their programme. The proportion of candidates who achieve during each test opportunity therefore cannot be taken to infer an overall success rate.

Information about the proportion of candidates passing each of the paper based tests with City & Guilds during 2003-04 is available on our [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site. We have consolidated this data to show the overall proportion of tests over the year for which a pass was awarded, although we would urge you to treat these figures with caution.

More information about the key skills can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org)

For the attention of the  
key skills co-ordinator

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Issue 05 – March 2005

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## Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4  
Scheme numbers 3638, 3618 and other City & Guilds schemes that include access to key skills qualifications

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- New centre guide – main changes
- Online testing – an update
- Key skills logbooks – how to use them

'Key skills news' is published every month and contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds. Previous editions can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

## New centre guide – main changes

The new City & Guilds key skills centre guide is now available to download from our [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org) site. A complimentary hard copy is also being distributed to each active key skills centre and external verifier during this month (along with the new wider key skills example portfolios).

The new centre guide supersedes all previous editions of the key skills handbook and is applicable to **both** the 2000 key skills specifications and 2004 standards. It contains the following additional information:

- enhanced assessor and internal verifier portfolio referencing checklists – each aligned to the 2004 standards
- a clear list of all the documents we require key skills co-ordinators to hold, with details of how to obtain each one
- clearer guidance on access arrangements for candidates with particular requirements in light of the advice we gave in Issue 04 of key skills news
- how to convert a Communication or Application of Number test pass into an adult literacy/numeracy qualification
- information about the wider key skills Part A affirmation/questioning process
- a much expanded candidate administration section, including an overview of the 2000-2004 transition.

All copies of the old key skills handbook should now be discarded in favour of the new document.

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Key skills news...



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## Online testing – an update

More than 100,000 key skills tests have now been taken online using GOLLA since we launched online testing for key skills in 2003. We fully expect the number of level 1-2 tests taken online to exceed those taken on paper before the end of this year as more and more centres take advantage of the following benefits:

- tests can be scheduled for any time (day or night) with as little as 24 hours' notice
- provisional results available as soon as a test has been completed
- lower fees per test, with no charge for 'no shows'.

The GOLLA system can also be used to carry out e-assessments for other City & Guilds qualifications, including many technical certificates.

We're currently providing candidate feedback reports for each candidate taking the Communication tests and fully intend to extend this facility to AoN and ICT in due course. However the reports as they are currently structured have been causing some confusion, and are investigating how best to improve them.

The reports divide each test into 'sections' (based on the topic areas in the test specification) and assign a percentage score for each based on the proportion of questions answered correctly. When reading these reports it is important to appreciate that the sections are not of an equal size, so it is perfectly possible that a '100%' score in one section may be worth less to a candidate in raw marks than '50%' in another.

We would welcome any comments on how these reports could be made more meaningful, and in the meantime would encourage all staff involved in preparing candidates for the tests to take a look at the specification for each test (published on QCA's website at [www.qca.org.uk/6445\\_6481.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/6445_6481.html)) since these make the composition of each test much easier to understand.

## Key skills logbooks – how to use them

Our key skills standard/logbook documents (available to download from our [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site) have proved popular with many centres. There's a separate self-contained document for each key skill and level which can simply be printed off and given to candidates.

Each document is structured as follows:

Section	Detail and purpose
Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>reproduces the standard in full</li><li>candidates <b>must</b> have a personal copy of the standard for any key skills they are working towards.</li></ul>
Part A coverage record sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>designed to help candidates and assessors/tutors check coverage of Part A during teaching and learning</li><li>use is strongly encouraged as good practice, although is not a compulsory part of the assessment process and is <b>not</b> subject to verification</li><li>should not be confused with the Part A affirmation/questioning process for the wider key skills although may be helpful when determining which questions need to be asked.</li></ul>
Part B evidence record sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>for recording the nature and location of portfolio evidence presented to meet each component and sub-component within Part B of the standard</li><li>must be used unless a suitable alternative has been agreed in advance with your EV.</li></ul>

More information about the key skills can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org)

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## Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4  
Scheme numbers 3638, 3618 and other City & Guilds schemes that include access to key skills qualifications

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### This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Use of email within ICT at level 1-2 – arrangements for prisons and other centres where there are restrictions on email access
- Use of chart and/or diagram in AoN level 1 component N1.3
- Access Arrangements for candidates with particular requirements
- Key skills centre guide – now ready!!!

'Key skills news' is published every month and contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds. Previous editions can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

Use of email within ICT at level 1-2 – arrangements for prisons and other centres where there are restrictions on email access  
You may recall that QCA recently issued some guidance on how the requirement to show purposeful use of email in the course of completing an ICT level 1 or 2 portfolio under the 2004 standards might be met where the qualification is being delivered within a prison (see Issue 01 of Key skills news).

A number of centres have recently asked us to clarify what a 'simulated' or 'peer to peer' solution might involve in practice. We are anxious not to be too prescriptive since there are many local factors that might influence how this requirement could be approached. At our suggestion, QCA have confirmed that the following principles **must** apply in all cases:

1. The 'email' must be individually generated by each candidate (eg a generalised statement indicating that candidates have been taught about email would **not** be acceptable evidence).
2. It should involve the use of ICT in some way (eg candidates could word-process the text of an email they plan to send, then explain to their Assessor what they would need to do to send it as an email; alternatively candidates could be provided with a document template that enables them to complete what appear to be 'To', 'Cc', 'Bc' and 'subject' fields as well as the message itself).
3. There must be clear purpose behind the email even if it is not actually sent to anybody, eg the email could be asking for feedback on work the candidate has done.

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# Key skills news...



Whilst this guidance is intended primarily for prisons, it is appreciated that some other learning environments also have constraints on access to email. It is important to bear in mind that purposeful use of email does not necessarily require candidates to have their own email account, and that an email sent within a closed network or intranet would be perfectly acceptable. However, where circumstances genuinely preclude this, the above principles can be applied.

## Use of chart and/or diagram in AoN level 1 component N1.3

This is another area where we have been asked for clarification about interpreting the 2004 key skill standards. For component N1.3 within Application of Number, it is necessary to present findings in more than one way using charts or diagrams. Whereas the 2000 specifications required candidates to include both a chart and a diagram, the revised standards require only the use of **either**. For example, it would be acceptable to include diagrams in both presentations provided they were different and both were appropriate to the purpose of the activity.

## Access Arrangements for candidates with particular requirements

The common guidance on Access Arrangements and Special Consideration for candidates with particular requirements agreed between all key skills awarding bodies has now been fully incorporated into the new City & Guilds document 'Access to Assessments and Qualifications' (published in October 2004 and available from [www.city-and-guilds.co.uk/pls/cg2/docs/FOLDER/CG\\_PARK\\_HOME/DOWNLOADS/ACCESS+TO+ASSESSMENT+AND+QUALIFICATIONS\\_VERSION+1.PDF](http://www.city-and-guilds.co.uk/pls/cg2/docs/FOLDER/CG_PARK_HOME/DOWNLOADS/ACCESS+TO+ASSESSMENT+AND+QUALIFICATIONS_VERSION+1.PDF)).

Access to Assessment and Qualifications includes all of the instructions and necessary forms for candidates eligible for an adjustment in their assessment. This document also includes the tables that were in the former JCGQ Basic and Key Skills document outlining the arrangements appropriate to each key skill (eg confirming that readers are not permitted for the Communication test). These tables also appear in the new City & Guilds key skills centre guide (see below).

## Key skills centre guide – now ready!!!

The new centre guide is now complete and is in the process of being uploaded onto [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org). We're also arranging to have it printed so that a hard copy can be dispatched to each active City & Guilds key skills centre (the new example portfolios for the wider key skills will be sent at the same time); it will also be possible to purchase further hard copies of the centre guide from our Publications/Sales department in due course.

Note the centre guide replaces all of City & Guilds' previous key skills handbooks, which should now be discarded. Information about both the 2000 specifications and 2004 standards (including the new assessment arrangements for Wales) are included in this document.

More information about the key skills can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org)

For the attention of the  
key skills co-ordinator

City & Guilds

Issue 03 – January 2005

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## Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4  
Scheme numbers 3638, 3618 and other City & Guilds schemes that include access to key skills qualifications

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- New key skills portfolio component numbers for **Wales**  
\*\*\***IMPORTANT CHANGE – IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED**\*\*\*
- Invoicing problems with portfolio claims
- Key skills pricing – a reminder
- Key skills centre guide
- Example portfolios

'Key skills news' is published every month and contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds. Previous editions can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

## New key skills portfolio component numbers for **Wales**

Following some recent problems with our computer systems, we have needed to make an urgent change to the component numbers used within **3638-12** and **3638-13** the two Award (Complex) used for the 2004 key skills standards in **Wales**. England and Northern Ireland are unaffected by this change.

**As of 1 January 2005, components 102-148 inclusive within 3638-12 and 3638-13 have been renumbered 202-248 respectively.** The number sequencing remains unchanged, eg:

Communication level 1 -	is now <b>202</b> instead of 102
Application of Number level 2 -	is now <b>210</b> instead of 110
Working With Others level 3 -	is now <b>238</b> instead of 138
etc.	

The revised Directory pages for 3638 (attached) lists the correct number to use when claiming each key skill. Please note that the numbers used to claim portfolio proxies in Wales (eg 606, 612) remain unchanged.

Key skills news...

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## Invoicing problems with portfolio claims

We're introducing these new component numbers for Wales to resolve the recent problems some centres have experienced with incorrect amounts being charged for some portfolio component claims under 3638-01 (in England) and 3638-12 (in Wales).

All centres affected by this have been separately contacted with credit notes issued to offset any invoices raised in error. We're sorry about any inconvenience this has caused, although the component number change should eliminate any risk of it happening again.

## Key skills pricing – a reminder

The new 3638 Directory pages attached to this edition of 'Key skills news' list the three charging routes that we operate for key skills (two in Wales, one in England and Northern Ireland). In summary, for the 2004 standards these are as follows:

### **3638-01 (all candidates in England and Northern Ireland)**

Registration per candidate - £6.00

Online tests - £6.50

Paper test entries - £7.00 (L1-2), £8.00 (L3-4)

Portfolio claims ('main' three key skills) – no charge

Portfolio claims ('wider' key skills) - £5.00

Admin fee for Proxy claims - £3.00

### **3638-12 (Wales 'all inclusive' route)**

Registration per candidate - £20.00

Portfolio claims ('main' three key skills) - no charge

Portfolio claims ('wider' key skills) - no charge

Admin fee for Proxy claims - no charge

### **3638-13 (Wales 'pay as you go' route)**

Registration per candidate - £6.00

Portfolio claims ('main' three key skills) - £5.00

Portfolio claims ('wider' key skills) - £5.00

Admin fee for Proxy claims - £3.00

## Key skills centre guide

You'll be aware that this was due to be with you by the end of December, although we have reluctantly decided to hold it back just a couple more weeks so the above information about the new component numbers for Wales can be included. It **will** be available later this month (initially on [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org), though with one complimentary hard copy also sent to each active key skills centre).

## Example portfolios

We are pleased to let you know that the wider key skills example portfolios are now available at [www.qca.org.uk/6447.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/6447.html) (there's a link to this site from [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org)).

We will also be mailing one complete hard copy set to each centre once we received these from QCA.

Note the example portfolios for the wider key skills have been produced to align with the 2004 standards; the earlier examples covering the 'main' three key skills were written to the 2000 specifications, although QCA have since published commentaries mapping these examples to the 2004 standards (also on the website).

We'd strongly encourage key skills assessors to make use of these examples, as they provide an invaluable guide to national expectations of the minimum standard.

## Attached papers

- Revised 3638 Directory pages applicable from 1 January 2005  
**\*\*\*please discard any earlier versions\*\*\*.**

More information about the key skills can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org)

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**For the attention of the  
key skills co-ordinator**

**City &  
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**Issue 02 – December 2004**

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## **Key Skills Qualifications**

**Levels** 1 to 4  
**Scheme numbers** 3638, 3618 and other City & Guilds schemes that include access to key skills qualifications

### **This month's news sheet contains the following information:**

- Example portfolio commentaries for 2000 to 2004 mapping
- Wider key skills qualifications pilot and Part A questions
- Application of Number portfolio proxies – when to use them
- City & Guilds key skills centre guide
- Test dates for 2004-05 – no tests in April or August
- Season's greetings

'Key skills news' is published every month and contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds. Previous editions can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

### **Example portfolio commentaries for 2000 to 2004 mapping**

QCA have now published guidance mapping the example portfolios recently produced for the 'main' three key skills to the 2004 standards. These can be viewed alongside the portfolio documents at

[www.qca.org.uk/qualifications/types/6447.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/qualifications/types/6447.html) (or via a link from [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org)).

We recently mailed two complete complimentary sets of the example portfolio documents to each active City & Guilds key skills centre. These should be used in conjunction with the commentaries when comparing the examples to the 2004 standards.

Please note City & Guilds has not been provided with any 'spare' copies of these documents. If you need more copies, they can either be downloaded from the QCA website (see above) or ordered through QCA Publications.

### **Wider key skills qualifications pilot and Part A questions**

Candidates completing any of the 2004 wider key skills will receive a full qualification certificate rather than a unit award. The qualification status pilot requires candidates' knowledge and understanding (as defined by Part A of the standard) to be explicitly affirmed.

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**Key skills news...**



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The Part A questions are designed to ensure this. They should be used flexibly to enable candidates to fill in any apparent gaps in their knowledge and understanding not obviously demonstrated through their portfolio. The following clarification may be useful:

1. The questions are available to download (in the format of a Candidate's Paper) from our **key-skills.org** site – in the same section as the new logbook documents. Most key skills awarding bodies are using the same standard set of questions – we've simply formatted them in this way to make them easier to present to candidates.
2. We're producing guidance to help assessors use the questions. This will be added to the site early in the New Year.
3. Our guidance will emphasise where and how questions should be used, eg where it is unclear from the portfolio evidence that the candidate has all the required knowledge and understanding. **This will vary from candidate to candidate** and the questioning process cannot be carried out on a 'group' basis.

For example, if a candidate had not demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the importance of setting deadlines through a in a Working With Others level 1 portfolio, the candidate should be asked to respond to question 3 from the Working With Others Part A questions.

It is possible that some candidates might have very obviously covered the whole of Part A in their portfolios, in which case the Part A questions would not be needed. However, unless the **whole** of Part A is clearly demonstrated, questioning will need to take place.

## Application of Number portfolio proxies – when to use them

You may have noticed that it is now possible to claim proxy components for Application of Number portfolio at levels 1, 2 or 3. These have been added as a result of **GCE AS Level Use of Mathematics** recently being recognised as a proxy qualification for both the AoN test *and* portfolio at level 3.

The AoN portfolio proxy component numbers (504, 510 and 516 for the 2000 specifications, or 604, 610 and 616 for the 2004 standards) may **only** be used when a candidate holds AS Level Use of Mathematics. Since this qualification allows complete proxy exemption for the level 3 key skills qualification, the level 1 and level 2 components have only been created for the theoretical possibility that a candidate might wish to be certificated at a lower level than s/he is entitled to. **In practice we would not expect 504/604 and 510/610 to ever be used!**

Note there are currently no proxy qualifications that exempt candidates from completing a Communication portfolio at any level.

We would also emphasise that the proxy exemption arrangements for key skills assessment must not be confused with the relaxation ruling which determines whether or not learners are required/expected to achieve particular key skills in the first place. The proxy components may **only** be used where candidates satisfy the requirements for proxy exemption.

The procedures for checking and recording proxy exemption are explained more fully in the current City & Guilds key skills handbook (see information about new centre guide below).

## City & Guilds key skills centre guide

Unfortunately, it has taken us slightly longer than anticipated to finalise the new City & Guilds key skills centre guide (replacing the key skills handbook). We are putting the finishing touches to this document now, and it will be available on **key-skills.org** by the end of December.

In the meantime, the current (2003) key skills handbook should be read in conjunction with the August 2004 Product Update (see **key-skills.org** if you have not received this).

All active key skills centres will receive a complimentary hard copy of the new centre guide in the New Year.

## Test dates for 2004-05 – no paper tests in April or August

As a reminder, City & Guilds will **not** be offering any paper-based key skills tests during **April 2005** or **August 2005**.

Any centres needing access to the tests during these months are urged to consider switching to on-line testing where level 1-2 key skills and Adult Literacy/Numeracy tests can be accessed at any time on any day. More information about our GOLA on-line testing system can be found at **www.city-and-guilds.co.uk/gola**.

## Season's greetings

Finally, may we wish you a very happy Christmas and festive period. We recognise that delivering and assessing the key skills qualifications can be a major challenge, and this year in particular has seen a number of important changes. We'd like to record our thanks for all of your hard work over the past year, and look forward to continuing to work with you during 2005.

More information about the key skills can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: **www.key-skills.org**

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## Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4  
Numbers 3638, 3618 and other City & Guilds schemes that include access to key skills qualifications

### This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Key skills 2004 – reminder of the changes
- Key skills tests – dates for 2004-05 and discontinuation in Wales
- Correct wording on key skills certificates
- Data files for 2004-05 ICT level 3 and 4 tests
- Use of email in 2004 ICT level 1 and 2 standards
- QCA Guidance documents for 2004 standards
- Part A questions for wider key skills
- City & Guilds key skills centre guide
- Co-ordinated Sector Sampling for level 4 key skills
- City & Guilds' key skills accreditation and Qualification Aim Numbers

This is the first edition of *Key skills news*. It contains all the latest information and updates about the key skills qualifications awarded by City & Guilds and will be published every month. The most recent Product Update preceding this news sheet (dated August 2004) can be viewed at [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).

### Key skills 2004 – reminder of the changes

The 2004 key skills standards replaced the previous 2000 specifications on 1 September 2004. Although the key skills qualifications continue to be accessed through City & Guilds scheme 3638, candidates registered after 1 September 2004 **must** be assessed against the 2004 standards.

New registrations **must** be made under the following Award (Complex) numbers:

#### England and Northern Ireland

3638-01 only

#### Wales

3638-12 or 3638-13

Note 3638-90 is now closed to new registrations; candidates already registered under this number or under scheme 3618 will need to be re-registered using 3638-01 (3638-12 or -13 in Wales) if wishing to access the 2004 standards.

Key skills news...

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New City & Guilds key skills logbooks incorporating the 2004 standards are now available from the 'Download Information' section on [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org). These documents must be used to record candidates' portfolio evidence unless an alternative has been agreed in advance with your external verifier.

More information about the transition to the 2004 standards is given in the **August 2004** key skills Product Update. Note there are two editions of this document – one for England and Northern Ireland, and a separate one for Wales.

## Key skills tests – dates for 2004-05 and discontinuation in Wales

As a reminder, candidates in Wales working to the 2000 key skills specifications **do** still need to pass key skills tests (unless they have a valid/current proxy qualification), although we are only permitted to offer key skills tests to centres in Wales during **November 2004** and **January 2005**. The closing date for January test entries is Wednesday 1 December 2004.

Any candidates still needing to pass a test after January's test opportunity will need to switch to the 2004 standards. Arrangements for this are explained more fully in the August 2004 Product Update.

For centres in England and Northern Ireland, please be aware that City & Guilds is offering **eight** level 1-2 fixed-date paper test opportunities this year instead of the twelve series offered in previous years. The test dates can be found on [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org) under 'Latest news'.

## Correct wording on key skills certificates

As a result of a programming error, some City & Guilds key skills certificates issued in the past few months contained a potentially confusing message stating that candidates had been 'successful in the following zero components'. This **has** now been corrected, although the following explanation of how key skills certificates are formatted may be helpful.

The key skills qualifications are each single-unit qualifications that can only be certificated once all of the required assessment components have been completed. This is why we do not issue certificates of unit credit for any of the key skills, and why it is not possible to obtain a certificate for 'just' a test pass or for 'just' a portfolio (except for the wider key skills or for candidates completing under the 2004 standards in Wales).

Certificates are worded as per the following examples. A separate certificate is issued for each key skills qualification.

LEVEL 1 KEY SKILLS IN COMMUNICATION (2000)

LEVEL 2 KEY SKILLS IN APPLICATION OF NUMBER (2004)

LEVEL 3 KEY SKILLS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2000)

LEVEL 4 KEY SKILLS IN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (2004)

LEVEL 2 UNIT AWARD IN IMPROVING OWN LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE (2000)

LEVEL 3 KEY SKILLS IN WORKING WITH OTHERS (PILOT) (2004)

The assessment components that make up a key skills qualification (eg a test and portfolio) are **not** listed on certificates, since these are not in themselves a certificated outcome. Certificates will not, for example, indicate whether the test component has been completed by taking an online test, a paper test or by proxy exemption. Similarly, differences in the assessment regime between nations (ie whether or not candidates need to complete a test) is not stated on certificates since the qualification outcome itself is the same.

Although **any key skills certificates issued before these changes were made continue to be valid documents**, we are nevertheless happy to replace on request any key skills certificates bearing the 'zero components' message. Please contact our Operation Support Department (020 7294 2787 or [results@city-and-guilds.co.uk](mailto:results@city-and-guilds.co.uk)) to arrange this.

## Data files for 2004-05 ICT level 3 and 4 tests

The files needed for each of the level 3 and level 4 key skills tests over the coming year can now be downloaded from [www.qca.org.uk/qualifications/types/6445\\_1824.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/qualifications/types/6445_1824.html). We have been advised that some of these files (relating to the scenarios 'Creative', 'Youth', 'Members' and 'Club') contained errors when they were first uploaded to the site. If you downloaded these files at any time before **16 September 2004** you will need to replace them with a more recent set.

Please be aware that these files should be downloaded and stored locally well in advance of any tests taking place so that candidates have the opportunity to become familiar with the forms of data used. However, candidates should not know in advance of a test which particular set of files they will need to work with.

## Use of email in the 2004 ICT level 1 and 2 standards

Colleagues at QCA have issued the following guidance in relation to the requirement within the level 1 and level 2 2004 standards for ICT that candidates show purposeful use of email:

*We have received a few queries about the new requirement to use email in ICT levels 1 and 2 and the issues this raises for candidates taking the key skills in prisons. As you probably know, prisoners often do not have access to the internet and so cannot send and receive emails.*

*We are keen that centres should seek to deliver an appropriate learning experience and to that end we should be as flexible as we can, in order not to disadvantage this particular group of candidates. Where internet, intranet or peer networking facilities aren't available, 'simulation' or even a 'peer to peer' solution could be used.*

## QCA guidance documents for 2004 standards

The Guidance document covering the wider key skills has now been published, and we are in the process of dispatching hard copies of both this and the Guidance document covering the 'main' three key skills to key skills co-ordinators in all active City & Guilds key skills centres.

Please be aware that every key skills assessor **must** have a personal copy of the relevant Guidance document(s). Further copies of both documents can be downloaded from [www.qca.org.uk/qualifications/types/6507.html](http://www.qca.org.uk/qualifications/types/6507.html) or they can alternatively be purchased from QCA Publications. Order references are QCA/04/1272 (for the 'main' key skills) and QCA/04/1274 (for the wider key skills). Note these documents are not published or stocked by City & Guilds.

Hard copies of the example portfolio documents for the 'main' three key skills are being sent at the same time as the Guidance documents (two complete sets for each centre). Since these examples were produced to the 2000 key skills specifications QCA will shortly be publishing commentaries identifying how evidence could be mapped to the 2004 standards. We will provide a link to these from [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org) once they are available.

We understand example portfolios for the wider key skills will be available shortly.

## Part A questions for wider key skills

The new Part A questions that are to be used with candidates completing the 2004-standard wider key skills qualifications are now available on [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org) (on the same page as the logbooks).

The questions are intended to check candidates' knowledge and understanding of Part A; assessors should use the questions flexibly to confirm any aspects of Part A that have not been explicitly demonstrated through the portfolio.

The questions are not designed to be part of the portfolio, and they should not be carried out before the portfolio has been completed and the assessor is satisfied that it meets all of the assessment criteria within Part B.

The extent to which Part A coverage is evident within the portfolio will affect how the questioning is carried out. Assessors should use follow up prompts such as 'What if...' or 'How would you...' where appropriate to tease out any uncertainty over candidates' knowledge and understanding of the concepts and skills they have used. Whilst it is possible that a portfolio could explicitly cover the whole of Part A, in the vast majority of cases the questioning process will need to be carried out as follows:

- level 1 – at least one question from each section
- level 2 – each of the three specified questions
- levels 3 and 4 – the specified question with prompting as necessary.

Part A questioning must be carried out individually with each candidate – it **cannot** be done as a group activity. Likewise, any responses candidates give must be in an auditable format and should be subject to the internal and external verification process. Your EV will need to see records of your Part A questioning when sampling any of the wider key skills.

We will be providing more detailed guidance for assessors on using the Part A questions later in the autumn, although it should be emphasised that **this is a summative process that cannot take place before the portfolio has been completed.**

## City & Guilds key skills centre guide

We are currently working on this document that will replace the 2003 edition of the key skills handbook and aim to have it available by the end of November. In the meantime, the current handbook should be used as a point of reference, along with the August 2004 Product Update and *Key skills news*. If you are still using the old key skills handbook dating from 2000 (with a blue cover) this must be discarded in favour of the 2003 edition. This can either be purchased from City & Guilds Publications Sales or downloaded from [key-skills.org](http://key-skills.org).

## Co-ordinated Sector Sampling for level 4 key skills

As we mentioned in the August 2004 Product Update, we're introducing a new system for quality assuring level 4 key skills portfolios, known as Co-ordinated Sector Sampling (CSS). Instead of portfolios being sampled during external verification, a panel of experienced EVs will instead meet periodically to review every level 4 candidate's portfolio centrally.

We will be holding our first CSS meeting during November, and therefore any **completed** level 4 portfolios that have been subject to the internal verification process must be sent in by Monday 1 November. **On this occasion**, they need to be sent to:

Key Skills Team  
Language, Learning, Development and Creative Sector  
City & Guilds  
1 Giltspur Street  
London  
EC1A 9DD

All portfolios will be returned after the meeting has taken place, with advice as to whether or not certification can be claimed. The next CSS meeting after then is likely to take place next summer.

Note these new arrangements only apply to level 4; the existing pattern of verification (including Direct Claims status where applicable) continues for levels 1-3.

We will be writing to all centres that have submitted level 4 key skills test entries within the past year to confirm these arrangements.

## City & Guilds' key skills accreditation and Qualification Aim Numbers

Finally, we are pleased to confirm that the regulatory authorities (QCA, ACCAC and CCEA) have extended City & Guilds' accreditation as a key skills awarding body until 2008. The Qualification Aim Numbers (reference numbers for funding and other purposes) for each of the key skills qualifications are set out in the 3638 Directory page included with the August 2004 Product Update.

If you checked *OpenQuals* or the *Learning Aims Database* during the early part of September you may not have been able to find confirmation of our accreditation for the 'main' three key skills. We understand from colleagues at QCA that there was an administrative delay in logging our accreditation extension, although the correct information **does** now appear on *OpenQuals*.

Note the Qualification Aim Numbers for Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology are unchanged from those that applied to the 2000 specifications. However, the **new** qualification numbers assigned to the wider key skills are applicable only to achievement under the 2004 standards.

More information about the key skills can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: [www.key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org).