

Key skills qualifications

Levels	1 to 4
Qualification numbers	3638 and any qualification packages including access to key skills qualifications

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- New tests resource centre up and running
- More example portfolios now ready
- ICT level 3-4 data files for 2006-07
- 3618 and access to the 2000 specifications now closed
- Functional skills trials – more information coming soon
- ICT as an Essential Skill level 1-2 pilot (Northern Ireland)
- NVQ Language Units (3377)
- Please tell us what you think about the website

'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.

New tests resource centre up and running

Our new key skills and adult numeracy/literacy tests resource centre, mentioned in Issue 19 of *Key skills news*, is now up and running. This new web page consolidates all information relating the tests in one place and can be accessed from both the [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) and [basic-skills.org.uk](http://www.basic-skills.org.uk) sites (via 'Download information').

We are also in the process of increasing the range of practice tests available. More examples of each test will be appearing on the site over the next month.

More example portfolios now ready

QCA have now published a further two combined example portfolios covering the following:

- Application of Number level 1, ICT level 2 and Communication level 3
- Application of Number level 1, Communication level 2 and Problem Solving level 2.

Each active City & Guilds key skills centre will receive a hard copy of these two documents during September, though they are also available to download (via a link from the Download information page on our [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site).

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in this publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



ICT level 3-4 data files for 2006-07

QCA has recently refreshed the data files on its website so the appropriate files for all ICT level 3 and 4 tests up until September 2007 are now available. The files are located at www.qca.org.uk/603_1824.html.

You are reminded that **all** of 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 will have common folder/file names. There is further guidance on the site about accessing and storing these files.

3618 and access to the 2000 specifications now closed

Just a quick reminder that 3618 is now completely closed, and that the last certification date for achievement under the 2000 key skills specifications has now passed.

As we have indicated before (most recently in Issue 19 of *Key skills news*), any evidence that has been assessed against the 2000 specs will almost always meet the 2004 key skills standards as well; the only possible area of uncertainty is the need to demonstrate purposeful use of email for ICT at levels 1-3.

Functional skills trials – more information coming soon

We have now submitted our formal plans to QCA for the functional skills trials taking place over the next few months. As we indicated in Issue 19 of *Key skills news*, the trials will be investigating how each of the three functional skills should be assessed and whether the draft functional skills standards are fit for purpose. QCA will use evidence from the trials when making its recommendation to ministers about the design of the functional skills qualifications next Spring.

Although we still need to confirm the detail of our project proposal with QCA, we are intending to trial an approach that involves moulding an assignment/task template to various vocational and other contexts. We will publish a more detailed prospectus for the trials within the next month, after which we will be inviting a very small number of existing key skills centres (**no more than six**) to take part.

These small-scale trials should not be confused with the much larger pilot of the new qualifications, planned to run from September 2007. We intend to start recruiting centres for the pilot from about next April.

ICT as an Essential Skill level 1-2 pilot (Northern Ireland)

City & Guilds is working with the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and CCEA to pilot a suite of level 1-2 Essential Skills ICT qualifications in Northern Ireland. The new qualifications will require candidates to produce a portfolio of evidence meeting criteria drawn from the ICT Skills for Life level 1-2 standards, although unlike the other level 1-2 Essential Skills or key skills qualifications there will be no desktop task or test.

Centres taking part in the pilot have already attended a two-day briefing session organised by the regulatory team at CCEA. However, we will be holding a further informal meeting **specifically for City & Guilds centres** involved in the pilot on **Friday 13 October** at our office in Belfast. This will outline the support we will be providing over the course of the pilot as well as arrangements for agreeing project/task briefs and registering candidates. Pilot centres will be contacted directly with more detailed information about this meeting.

New NVQ Language Units (3377)

We're pleased to announce that City & Guilds has recently been accredited to offer NVQ units in the following languages:

<u>Language</u>	<u>Levels available</u>
English (as an additional or foreign language)	1-3
French	1-3
German	1-3
Italian	1-3
Spanish	1-3
Welsh	1-4

The NVQ Language Units are based on the 2005 National Language Standards and are intended to recognise use of language in a work or vocational context. For example, Language Units could be completed alongside an NVQ in Customer Service where the candidate interacts with customers in another language.

Each language/level has units covering Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening; although they are technically a collection of NVQ Units rather than a full NVQ, candidates completing all four units in a given language will receive an 'NVQ Language Units' Certificate.

The NVQ Language Units (3377) replace our existing suite of Vocational Language Units (3376). These closed to new registration on 31 August 2006. The new Language Units will be open for registrations from 1 October 2006 and the Standards and Assessment Requirements document will be available to download from the **cityandguilds.com** site by that date. We will be contacting all existing 3376 centres about Fast-track approval arrangements

Please tell us what you think about the website

We have mentioned in the last few issues of *Key skills news* that we're planning to subsume the current **key-skills.org** and **basic-skills.org.uk** sites within City & Guilds' main website. This is part of a broader corporate strategy of streamlining communications with centres and learners, although we want to make sure that all the important information and resources currently available via the dedicated sites can still be easily found after the switch-over takes place.

We're therefore interested in what you particularly want us to make sure we keep when the sites are changed, as well as what you would be happy for us to get rid of. Please email any comments to keyskills@cityandguilds.com.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: www.basic-skills.org.uk

Key skills qualifications

Levels	1 to 4
Qualification numbers	3638, 3618 and any qualification packages including access to key skills qualifications

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- guidance for centre staff doing key skills qualifications
- final goodbye to the 2000 specs and farewell to 3618
- more practice tests on the way
- next set of example portfolios coming soon
- Functional Skills – where we're at

'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.

Guidance for centre staff doing key skills qualifications

We have always encouraged key skills tutors, assessors and internal verifiers to work towards and achieve the key skills qualifications. This can be a good way of demonstrating competence in the skills being taught as well as helping to develop a better understanding of what's involved in putting a portfolio together and taking a key skills test.

Anybody doing so, however, needs to appreciate the potential conflict of interest between their role as a member of centre staff and that of a candidate. In most situations this should be perfectly possible to manage without incident, though there is a particular need to ensure staff-candidates do not have prior access to key skills tests or anything else that would give them an unfair advantage.

We would especially draw your attention to the following statement which appears in our general regulations for the conduct of examinations (contained within Providing City & Guilds Qualifications):

Any member of staff at a centre or registered invigilator who wishes to sit an examination should write to the Manager, Co-ordinated Assessment Services, at City & Guilds, before making an entry for the examination to request permission. Provided that suitable arrangements for the security of the examination papers, invigilation of the examination and preparation of any specialist work or materials can be made, permission will be given. Failure to inform City & Guilds in writing and obtain permission may result in disqualification or make the examination void.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in this publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



Final goodbye to the 2000 specs and farewell to 3618

Thursday 31 August 2006 is the official last certification date for achievement under the 2000 key skills specifications. You may recall that we actually closed-off access to the 2000-spec portfolio components within 3638 last February (see Issue 15 of *Key skills news*), though at the time we indicated that it was still acceptable for 2000-specification recording documentation to be used if the portfolio was started before 1 September 2004.

Assessors that chose to do this needed to bear in mind assessing evidence against the 2000 specs would be likely to disadvantage candidates (eg by requiring both a chart *and* a graph for Application of Number). The 2000-2004 transition arrangements were designed to enable pre-2004 candidates to move across to the newer standards; most have already done so, though please note that after 31 August 2006:

- key skills assessments **must in all cases** be against the relevant 2004 standard (as amplified by the 2004 key skills qualifications standards and guidance)
- any logbooks or other recording documentation **must** reference evidence to Part B of the relevant 2004 key skills standard(s) – any portfolio work referenced only to the 2000-spec will no longer be acceptable.

Thursday 31 August is also when we finally say goodbye to 3618 (predecessor to 3638). Since 3618 closed to new registrations at the end of September 2003 there are now only a small number of candidates who still have 3618 registrations. Of these, all but a handful will have long since completed any key skills qualifications they were working towards or re-registered for 3638 (necessary for accessing the 2004 standards). However please be aware of this deadline if you do still have any results to submit under 3618. The last paper-based tests opportunity available to 3618 candidates (June 2006) has already passed.

Any 3618 candidates still needing additional time to complete after the end of August will need to be re-registered via 3638-01 (3638-12 or -13 in Wales). All evidence needs to be assessed against the 2004 standards, though with the possible exception of needing to demonstrate purposeful email for ICT this will not involve the candidate having to produce any additional evidence. Any key skills tests achieved via 3618 will remain on our systems and will trigger certification once a portfolio in the same key skill at the same level has been claimed via 3638.

We will not be re-opening 3618 under any circumstances.

More practice tests on the way

A number of level 1-2 key skills tests have recently been retired from the bank of live tests being used across all key skills awarding bodies. We will shortly be making all of these past papers available as practice tests.

Over the summer we will be moving all information relating to the key skills and adult numeracy/literacy tests into a single national tests resource centre. This new web page will serve both the **key-skills.org** and **basic-skills.org.uk** sites and will consolidate information relating to all of the tests in one place. The resource centre will include:

- paper test dates
- all 'retired' level 1-2 paper tests, along with answer keys
- all past level 3 tests since November 2003, along with the final mark scheme; the more recent tests will also include an examiner's report

- all past level 4 tests since November 2003 for each key skill (where entries were received), along with the final mark scheme.
- at least one practice online test for each level 1-2 key skill, plus the generic GOLLA navigation test
- guidance on how to read the new format online test performance 'score reports'
- the pass mark ranges for each test at each level
- a link to the Basic and Key Skills Test Specifications (on QCA's website).

As we indicated in the Issues 17 and 18 of *Key skills news*, we are currently reviewing both the **key-skills.org** and **basic-skills.org.uk** sites. The national tests resource centre is a response to some of the comments we have received over the last few months. If you have any further ideas or suggestions for improving either of the sites please forward them to **keyskills@cityandguilds.com**.

Next set of example portfolios coming soon

QCA have advised us that they will shortly be publishing a further two combined example portfolios. As with each of the previous example portfolios we will be sending a complimentary copy of each document to every active City & Guilds key skills centre. The portfolios will also be available from QCA's website (via a link from our **key-skills.org** site).

Functional Skills – where we're at

Following the article in Issue 18 of *Key skills news*, we're pleased to report that a number of centres have approached us about piloting of the new functional skills qualifications. We're grateful for this interest, although at this stage there is no plan to start any formal pilots (where functional skills certificates would be awarded) until **at least September 2007**.

We will be asking a small number (no more than three or four) existing key skills centres to trial possible assessment methods based on the draft Functional English, Mathematics and ICT standards in early 2007; these trials will probably entail a number of task-based activities though need only involve candidates who have already achieved (or are close to achieving) the equivalent key skills qualification.

QCA will be making a report to ministers once the trials have been completed, recommending the assessment strategy or range of strategies that should be adopted. Only at this point will be we able to begin in earnest the process of developing the new qualifications.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: **www.basic-skills.org.uk**

This page is intentionally blank

Key skills qualifications

Levels	1 to 4
Qualification numbers	3638, 3618 and any qualification packages including access to key skills qualifications

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Level 4 portfolio panel – arrangements for June 2006
- Functional skills – a quick update
- New format online tests score reports – feedback from the questionnaire
- Your thoughts on *Key skills news*

'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.

Level 4 portfolio panel – arrangements for June 2006

The closing date for receiving any level 4 key skills portfolios for the June 2006 panel review is **Monday 26 June**. Please email keyskills@cityandguilds.com and contact your external verifier if you have one or more candidates working towards any of the level 4 key skills qualifications and have not received a letter from us outlining the arrangements for the review process.

As we have indicated in previous issues of *Key skills news*, our level 4 panel review carries out a 100% sample. **All level 4 portfolios must be submitted to the panel before certification may be claimed.**

The next panel review meeting will take place in November 2006.

Functional skills – a quick update

QCA are making some changes to the draft standards for Functional English, Mathematics and ICT following the recent consultation. This will be followed up in the autumn by trials of possible assessment methods.

City & Guilds is one of several awarding bodies to express an interest in participating in these trials. We are currently discussing the exact nature of our involvement with QCA, although we will in due course be looking for a number of centres and candidates to try out a number of approaches. These trials will involve existing key skills candidates, and won't lead to any separate 'functional skills' certification.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in this publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



We are very mindful of the need to ensure the functional skills are assessed in a meaningful way that enables learners to demonstrate practical application of these skills; it is also vital to ensure any assessment is not too unwieldy and flexible enough for all types of learning context.

The assessment trials will be followed by more formal piloting of the functional skills qualifications during 2007-08. The current key skills qualifications will continue to be available until at least 2010.

For more information about functional skills, go to www.qca.org.uk/functionalskills.

New format online tests score reports – feedback from the questionnaire

Thank you to all of those who responded to the recent questionnaire (attached to Issue 16 of *Key skills news* and mailed to all active key skills centres) on the new online tests score report that we have been trialling for Application of Number level 1 tests. You can still let us have your comments if you haven't already responded – either by completing the questionnaire or emailing your comments to keyskills@cityandguilds.com.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and we will be gradually introducing similar report formats for each of the other key skills and levels over the summer. The next one to be introduced will be for Communication level 1.

Please be aware that the pass marks for key skills tests vary slightly to take into account the relative accessibility of each individual test paper. The pass mark ranges for each key skill and level are set out on pages 47-48 of the City & Guilds key skills centre guide.

Your thoughts on *Key skills news*

Following recent changes to the City & Guilds' main website, the system of monthly mailings is also changing. Instead of Product Updates, each industry (key skills is categorised as 'General Learning' for this purpose) will in future have a page on the website for news items that will appear on the page itself. Signing up to receive the monthly mailing will ensure you receive an email alert when the industry page is updated.

For the time being, we intend to keep publishing *Key skills news* each month in its current format (ie as numbered newsletters that can be downloaded and saved/printed), although we are keen to gather your thoughts on whether this is the most effective way of keeping you informed about the latest developments within the world of key skills. Please email any comments about this to keyskills@cityandguilds.com.

We likewise intend to continue producing *Skills for Life news* each month, so would be grateful for your views on this as well.

As we indicated in Issue 17 of *Key skills news*, the dedicated key-skills.org site is due to be integrated with the main City & Guilds website over the next few months. We are interested to find out what features on the current site you would most like to see retained.

Attached papers

- Paper-based key skills test dates for 2006-07.
Please note the key skills tests are also available **on-demand** using the GOLLA online testing system.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: www.basic-skills.org.uk

This page is intentionally blank

Key skills qualifications

Levels	1 to 4
Qualification numbers	3638, 3618 and any qualification packages including access to key skills qualifications

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Online practice tests for ICT now reinstated
- Navigating the new City & Guilds website
- Level 4 portfolios – June Panel Review
- 15 minutes' reading time for Application of Number level 3 test
- Test entry closing dates – reminder
- Remember – 3618 closes at the end of August

'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.

Online practice tests for ICT now reinstated

Following the recent technical difficulties, we're pleased to advise that practice online ICT key skills tests are once again available in HTML Flash format from the [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site.

These practice tests are designed to simulate the GOLLA on-screen testing environment and are taken from past live key skills tests. The [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site also has a number of practice paper tests (as PDF documents) along with answer keys and mark schemes.

Navigating the new City & Guilds website

As you're probably aware, City & Guilds revamped its corporate website at the beginning of this month. The new site aims to provide far more extensive and coherent information about each of our qualifications, with distinct learner and centre pages for each qualification that conform to a template.

We are intending to integrate [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) with the new site in due course, although the new [cityandguilds.com](http://www.cityandguilds.com) site has some technical and capacity restrictions that prevent us from replicating the full range of what we currently provide for the key skills qualifications through the dedicated site. Until these are resolved, [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) will continue to hold all of our key skills information, logbooks and practice tests, as well as current and back issues of *Key skills news*. The key skills pages on [cityandguilds.com](http://www.cityandguilds.com) each contain links to the [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in this publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



We're interested in your views about both the **key-skills.org** and **basic-skills.org.uk** sites. What do you particularly like and want us to make sure we keep when the sites are changed, and what would you be happy for us to get rid of? Please email any comments to **keyskills@cityandguilds.com**.

Level 4 portfolios – June Review Panel

The next level 4 portfolio Review Panel will take place at the end of June.

Please note that level 4 key skills portfolios are not sampled as part of routine external verification; **all completed level 4 key skills portfolios must be scrutinised at one of our twice-yearly panel meetings before certification can be claimed.**

Please inform your external verifier **immediately** if you have any candidates working towards level 4 key skills qualifications. This will enable us to ensure you receive information about the arrangements for submitting portfolios to the next Panel.

15 minutes' reading time for Application of Number level 3 tests

Please be aware that candidates taking the Application of Number level 3 test are now entitled to an extra 15 minutes' reading time in addition to the formal 90 minutes time (see Issue 11 of *Key skills news*).

Candidates should be encouraged to make the most of the reading time and to read the questions carefully. During this time it is acceptable for candidates to underline information on their question paper as they read through and to consider strategies and make rough notes on the approach to take, though they should **not** start answering the questions in their answer booklets until the actual start of the test. Many candidates would benefit from practice in this skill. Candidates should be advised that rough notes and workings on the question paper will not be taken into consideration by the examiner; the examiner will mark **only** what is in the answer booklet. If candidates do their workings on the question paper and only show their final answers in the answer booklet they will not be given any credit for incorrect answers, even when these are close to the correct answers.

This additional time allowance **only** applies to the Application of Number level 3 test. No additional reading time is allowed for the AoN tests at any other level, or for any of the Communication or ICT tests.

Test entry closing dates – reminder

As we're currently in the midst of the busy exam season, it may be helpful for us to remind you about City & Guilds' late entry policy for all externally marked paper-based examinations and assessments, **including the key skills tests.**

Entries must be received in time for them to be **processed** before the first day of the month before the test date. For example, any entries for this year's June tests submitted on a Form S would need to have been received no later than 16:00 on Friday 28 April 2006 to avoid incurring a late entry fee.

Late entry fees are charged as follows:

- Form S (paper) entries processed between the first and seventh day of the month before the test:
£10 per component (in addition to the normal entry fee) plus a £45 admin fee
- Walled Garden or EDI entries processed between the first and seventh day of the month before the test:
no additional charge
- Form S (paper) entries processed between the eighth day of the month before the test and 14 days before the Monday of the exam/test week:
£20 per component (in addition to the normal entry fee) plus a £45 admin fee
- Walled Garden or EDI entries processed between the eighth day of the month before the test and 14 days before the Monday of the exam/test week:
£10 per component (in addition to the normal entry fee) plus a £45 admin fee.

We will not accept any entries received on or after 14 days before the Monday of the exam/test week (eg entries for the fixed date tests during the week beginning 5 June 2006 cannot be accepted after the close of business on Friday 19 May 2006). To meet this 14-day deadline, any Walled Garden entries must be submitted before 18:00 on the Sunday before the Monday and EDI files emailed before 16:00 on the Friday before.

Online testing works on a completely different basis with tests scheduled through the GOLAS system. Tests can be arranged for registered candidates with as little few hours' notice.

Remember – 3618 closes at the end of August

Although we have already withdrawn access to the 2000 key skills specifications for all 3638 candidates, they continue to be available to the handful of candidates with live **3618** registrations (ie key skills registrations made with City & Guilds between May and September 2003).

The formal last certification date for 2000 specs achievement is 31 August 2006 and we are therefore unable to accept any 3618 results or test entries after that date. Although test dates for September 2006 were initially included in the 3618 Directory page, it will **not** be possible to make entries for these tests.

Any 3618 candidates who have not been certificated by the end of August will need to be re-registered under 3638-01 (3638-12 or -13 in Wales). Any test passes achieved via 3618 will be automatically recognised within 3638.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: www.basic-skills.org.uk

This page is intentionally blank

Key skills qualifications

Levels	1 to 4
Qualification numbers	3638, 3618 and any qualification packages including access to key skills qualifications

1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD
T +44 (0)20 7294 2468
F +44 (0)20 7294 2400
www.cityandguilds.com
www.key-skills.org

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Proxy exemption – a summary of the requirements
- Key skills 2000 specifications now closed to 3638 candidates – a reminder
- Functional skills – have your say about the proposed new standards
- Key skills to continue until 2010
- New format online tests score reports
- Practice online tests on key-skills.org
- Combined example portfolios
- New fee structure for Essential Skills (3800) (Northern Ireland only)

'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.

Proxy exemption – a summary of the requirements

We've included guidance about the administrative processes for checking proxy qualifications and claiming proxy exemption in several recent issues of *Key skills news*. The following summary brings all of this together as well as setting out what happens if we identify any proxies that have been claimed 'early'. Full guidance on the arrangements for checking and claiming proxies can be found on pages 26-27 of the City & Guilds key skills centre guide (available from our [key-skills.org](http://www.key-skills.org) site).

What is a proxy?

Proxy qualifications enable candidates working towards a key skills qualification to claim exemption from the relevant key skills test. Occasionally (mostly for ICT), proxy exemption covers the key skills portfolio as well.

What about 'relaxations' and 'concessions'?

These are completely separate from proxy exemption. The Relaxation Ruling enables the key skills requirement in apprenticeships to be waived where candidates already hold A*-C GCSEs in English, Mathematics and (where relevant) ICT. Learners entitled to a relaxation are exempted from **needing** to achieve the key skill for their framework.

This doesn't mean learners cannot still complete the key skill if they so wish, and if they do it **might** be possible to claim proxy exemption depending on when the GCSE was awarded and when the key skill is completed.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in this publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



Learners only need to be registered as key skills candidates with City & Guilds if actually aiming to complete one or more key skills qualifications. We are not involved in checking relaxations or determining which key skills are needed for framework completion – this is a matter for your SSC and funding body.

How long are proxies valid for?

All proxy qualifications are subject to a strict three-year 'shelf life' – that is any key skills qualification gained with the use of a proxy qualification **must** be completed within three years of when the proxy qualification was awarded – eg a GCSE in English awarded in the summer of 2004 only entitles proxy exemption from the Communication test if the Communication portfolio is completed and claimed before 31 August 2007.

Hasn't that recently been increased to five years?

Absolutely not! The shelf life for proxy qualifications is, and always has been, **three** years. However, the Relaxation Ruling for apprenticeships (see above) now covers GCSEs that are up to five years old at the start of programme.

Who decides what is and isn't a proxy?

The regulatory authorities – QCA, ACCAC and CCEA. The definitive list of approved proxy qualifications can be found at www.qca.org.uk/6446.html. If it's not on the list, it isn't a proxy!

Who's responsible for checking proxies in City & Guilds key skills centres?

The **key skills co-ordinator** is responsible for ensuring there are adequate systems in place within the centre for checking, tracking and claiming proxies. Every proposed proxy claim needs to be checked by a person in authority (eg an internal verifier) and an annotated photocopy of the candidate's **original** certificate or results slip must be retained. These procedures are subject to audit as part of the external verification process.

Please note other key skills awarding bodies may operate different procedures for checking and recording proxy exemption, particularly those that operate 'moderation', rather than 'verification', based quality assurance.

How do we claim proxies?

Proxy exemption should be claimed as a Results Submission (via the Walled Garden or Form S) using the relevant proxy component number, eg '501-P' to claim exemption from the Communication level 1 test. The full list of proxy components can be found in the Directory.

To ensure the proxy qualification is still current when the key skill it is being used towards is certificated, our procedures require you to only claim proxy exemption from a test **at the same time as (or at least not before)** the portfolio it is being paired with.

What happens if we claim a proxy 'early'?

Each Regional/National City & Guilds office receives regular reports identifying where test proxy components have been claimed without the candidate yet having the corresponding portfolio component. This information is also sent to your key skills external verifier.

Early proxy claims are followed-up by letter and/or phone call; **failure to follow this procedure may lead to results being invalidated and/or direct claims status being withdrawn.**

Do we have to wait until the end of a candidate's programme before checking the proxy?

Checking a candidate's entitlement to a proxy is distinct from submitting a formal claim for proxy exemption to City & Guilds. Although the formal claim cannot be submitted until the qualification is ready to be awarded, we'd still encourage you to check candidates' entitlement to proxy exemption as early as possible during their programme to avoid the risk of tests being taken unnecessarily. This is why it is important to maintain comprehensive records of all candidates seeking proxy exemption.

What about candidates who have passed the adult literacy/numeracy national test or the key skills test with another awarding body?

Strictly speaking this isn't proxy exemption as these candidates have passed the test rather than substituting another assessment. However, the same administrative procedure as that for proxy qualifications must be followed (ie the original certificate or result slip checked and the proxy component claimed as a procedural device to enable key skills certification).

Unlike proxies, actual test passes are not subject to the three-year shelf life, although the claim must **not** be submitted to City & Guilds before the portfolio it is being paired with. The test pass will otherwise be flagged and investigated as a potential early proxy.

What about candidates who have passed their key skills portfolio with another awarding body and key skills test with City & Guilds?

Again this is not proxy exemption as the candidate isn't substituting another qualification for his/her key skills assessment. Evidence of the portfolio having been accepted by the other awarding body needs to be available for our key skills EV to inspect, although the portfolio should be claimed as normal. There are no separate 'proxy' components to use here.

Note inter-recognition only applies to partial achievement of a key skills qualification, ie just the test or just a portfolio. Candidates must not be certificated for the same qualification more than once.

How come are there some portfolio proxy components, eg 606, 612, etc?

Some proxy qualifications (mostly for ICT, though in one case for Application of Number at level 3) entitle candidates to proxy exemption from the key skills portfolio as well as the test. These proxy components may only be used where candidates have gained one of these qualifications in the past three years; when claiming both the test and portfolio proxy must be submitted at the same time.

Do proxies apply in Wales?

The key skills tests are not required where candidates have been registered by a centre in Wales. Proxy exemption from the test therefore does not apply, although the portfolio proxy components (see above) are available within 3638-12 and 3638-13 for use where candidates hold a proxy qualification that covers both test and portfolio.

What about candidates who have passed their key skills portfolio at one level and the test at another?

Where achievement of test and portfolio are at different levels, the candidate is entitled to certification at the lower of the two. Guidance on how to enable this is set out on pages 71-73 of the City & Guilds key skills centre guide.

Key skills 2000 specifications now closed to 3638 candidates

– a reminder

Following the announcement in Issue 15 of *Key skills news*, please bear in mind that the 2000-spec portfolio component numbers (002, 004, etc) within **3638** are no longer available. All claims must be made for achievement under the 2004 key skills standards, even if registered before September 2004.

Functional skills – have your say about the proposed new standards

QCA have published draft standards for the new functional skills qualifications in English, Mathematics and ICT that will eventually replace the current key skills and Skills for Life learner qualifications in England. More information, including an online questionnaire, is available from www.qca.org.uk/functionalskills.

Key skills to continue until 2010

Although functional skills are due to be piloted over the next couple of years, QCA have confirmed that the current key skills qualifications will continue to be available until at least 2010 (with certification until 2012).

All key skills awarding bodies are currently accredited to offer the qualifications until August 2008; we will of course apply for an extension once formally invited to do so.

New format online tests score reports

Following the changes to the on-screen appearance of key skills test on GOLLA that we announced in Issue 15 of *Key skills news*, we're also introducing changes to the format of the test performance 'score' reports that are issued at the end of each test.

The new format sets out the actual number of marks candidates attain on each section of the test rather than a percentage score. The new reports are initially being piloted for the Application of Number level 1 tests, allowing us to gather feedback and make any necessary refinements before introducing them for all online key skills tests.

A questionnaire is attached to this edition of *Key skills news* asking for feedback on the new format. We'd be very grateful for your comments, either via the questionnaire or by email to keyskills@cityandguilds.com.

Practice online tests on key-skills.org

For technical reasons, we have recently had to withdraw some of the practice online tests available on the key-skills.org site, most notably the example ICT tests. We are working to reinstate these as quickly as possible and aim to have them available before the end of April at the latest. We're really sorry for any inconvenience this might cause in the meantime.

Further examples of each test are available to SmartScreen.co.uk subscribers.

Combined example portfolios

We will shortly be distributing hard copies of the two new combined example portfolios that QCA recently published. Together with the free-standing examples, these are already available to download from www.qca.org.uk/6447.html.

Two further combined example portfolios are due to be published later in the year.

New fee structure for Essential Skills (3800) (Northern Ireland only)

Following a pricing review, we've recently introduced the following new Award (complex) numbers for the Certificates in Essential Skills (3800) available in Northern Ireland:

- **3800-11** replaces 3800-01 for adult numeracy at Entry level
- **3800-12** replaces 3800-02 for adult literacy at Entry level
- **3800-23** replaces 3800-03, -04, 05 and -06, giving a single point of registration for **both** Communication and Application of Number at levels 1 and 2.

All registrations under these new numbers are free of charge, with fees only levied for each assessment component at the time they are claimed. Numberwise and Wordwise units also continue to be available via 3800-11 and -12 respectively.

An updated 3800 Directory page is available to view on our basic-skills.org.uk site. Please be aware that the previous Award numbers, 3800-01, -02, -03, -04, -05 and -06 are now closed to new candidate registrations.

Attached papers

New format online tests score reports questionnaire.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: www.basic-skills.org.uk

This page is intentionally blank

For the attention of the
key skills co-ordinator

Issue 15 – February/March 2006

Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4
Qualification numbers 3638, 3618 and any qualification packages including access to key skills qualifications

1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD
T +44 (0)20 7294 2468
F +44 (0)20 7294 2400
www.cityandguilds.com
www.key-skills.org

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

- Removal of access to 2000 key skills specifications for all **3638** candidates from 1 March 2006
******IMPORTANT CHANGE – PLEASE NOTE AND ACTION******
- Changes to online tests' appearance and results reporting
- Proxy exemption list

'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.

Removal of access to 2000 key skills specifications for all 3638 candidates from 1 March 2006

You may recall that we introduced changes last autumn to the administrative procedure for claiming for portfolio achievement under the **2000** key skills specifications (see Issue 10 of *Key skills news*).

The 2000 specifications are theoretically available for certification until 31 August 2006, although may *only* be accessed by candidates registered with City & Guilds for the key skills qualifications *before* 1 September 2004. **All candidates registered for 3638-01 have access to the 2004 key skills standards even if registered whilst the 2000 specs were still in operation.**

The administrative changes introduced last autumn required all 2000-spec portfolio claims made under 3638-01 to be accompanied by a request form confirming candidates' eligibility to access the 2000 specs. Whilst the vast majority of key skills candidates are achieving their qualifications under the 2004 standards, a small number of centres are continuing to submit 2000-spec portfolio claims.

The need to be certain that candidates were eligible to access, and have genuinely met, these older more prescriptive specifications makes it necessary for us to process all of these claims manually. We are also mindful that the existence of two alternate sets of component numbers within 3638-01 has been a source of some confusion; the most recent 3638 Directory entry was some 20 pages long!

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



We are therefore introducing the following further changes to the **3638** scheme from **1 March 2006**:

1. portfolio achievement must be claimed under the 2004 key skills standards **in all cases**, even if the portfolio was originally assessed using the 2000 specifications
2. it will no longer be possible to claim portfolio achievement using any of the 2000 specification component numbers (002, 004, etc)
3. centres in Wales will no longer have approval for 3638-01 – candidates originally registered under that number have already been given a separate registration for **3638-13** (enabling access to the 2004 standards without requiring a key skills test).

There are very few differences between the 2000 specs and 2004 standards; the latter are expressed in clearer language and are generally less prescriptive. With one exception (the additional need to demonstrate purposeful use of email for ICT at levels 1-3), there is nothing in the 2004 standards' Part B that was not also needed for achievement under the 2000 specs. **In practice, any key skills evidence meeting the 2000 specification will almost certainly satisfy the 2004 standard as well.**

The Qualification Accreditation Numbers for the 'main' three key skills qualifications are the same irrespective of whether the portfolio has been assessed using the 2000 specs or 2004 standards. In the case of the wider key skills the 2004 standards have the status of full qualifications (appearing on the Learning Aims Database) whereas the 2000 specs could only be recognised as unit awards. Except in Wales, the key skills tests are the same whether candidates are achieving under the 2000 specs or 2004 standards.

Where candidates' key skills registration enables them to access the 2004 standards, there is nothing to be gained from assessing their portfolios against the 2000 specs. Insisting that these candidates work to the old specs may disadvantage them by requiring them to produce unnecessary additional evidence.

Please speak to your external verifier if you have any doubts about how to ensure evidence originally assessed against a 2000 specification also covers the 2004 standard. Issue 01 of *Key skills news* included guidance about meeting the 'purposeful use of email' requirement for ICT in secure environments.

Please note candidates can still be certificated under the 2000 key skills specifications if they hold a live **3618** registration (ie if originally registered between February and September 2003). These candidates must be **re-registered** under 3638-01 (3638-12 or 3638-13 in Wales) if they wish to be assessed against any of the 2004 standards.

Hopefully, these changes will simplify key skills administration, whilst ensuring candidates have the additional flexibility and more streamlined requirements afforded by the 2004 standards.

Changes to online tests' appearance and results reporting

Following a series of consultations and a focus group held last autumn, we have recently introduced the following changes to the on-screen appearance and results reporting for level 1-2 key skills tests taken on GOLLA:

- **Application of Number level 2**
Score reports now include the percentage bar per section that used for all other online tests.
- **Communication levels 1 and 2**
All exhibits are now 'draggable' around the screen with instructions on the top of each exhibit. Candidates can answer the questions without having to close the exhibit and can move to the next question without having to close the exhibit.
- **Example online tests**
At least one practice online tests for each key skill and level is now available on our **key-skills.org** site. The tests are presented in HTML Flash format, though are designed to simulate the on-screen appearance of a live GOLLA test. The Communication and Application of Number tests include enhanced performance feedback, eg explaining why responses to each question are correct or incorrect. We are grateful for the support of the *Move On* project in making these examples available.

Each of the Communication practice tests contain exhibits (more than would typically appear in a live test), enabling candidates to practise the technique of dragging exhibits around the screen.

We try to keep the use of exhibits in live tests to an absolute minimum, so it is important to point out to candidates that the pattern of an exhibit on every question is not typical. Unlike the practice tests, all live tests include dragging instructions at the top of every exhibit.

Proxy exemption list

QCA have added a footnote to the list of approved key skills proxy qualifications clarifying the status of the Certificates in Adult Numeracy and Adult Literacy on the list of approved proxy qualifications. The note confirms that these are not standard proxy qualifications as the national tests used to assess these qualifications are also key skills tests for Application of Number and Communication respectively. The proxy list can be viewed at www.qca.org.uk/6446_1051.html.

Attached papers

Revised 3638 Directory page

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: www.basic-skills.org.uk

This page is intentionally blank

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

**City &
Guilds**

Issue 14 – January 2006

Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4
Qualification numbers 3638, 3618 and any qualification packages including access to key skills qualifications

1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD
T +44 (0)20 7294 2468
F +44 (0)20 7294 2400
www.cityandguilds.com
www.key-skills.org

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Combined example portfolios – first batch now available
- Extra 15 minutes' reading time for Application of Number level 3 test - reminder

'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.

Combined example portfolios – first batch now available

The first two new combined example portfolio documents can now be downloaded from www.qca.org.uk/6447.html.

The two portfolios contain evidence covering the following key skills qualifications:

1. Communication level 1, Application of Number level 2 and ICT level 1
2. Working With Others level 3, Improving Own Learning and Performance level 3 and Problem Solving level 3.

QCA will also be publishing further two combined example portfolios shortly; again each one will cover at least three skill areas and a mixture of levels. Once these have been printed, we will be providing a complimentary set of all four documents to each active City & Guilds key skills centre.

City & Guilds, along with some of the other key skills awarding bodies, worked closely with QCA on the production of these documents; we hope they will help to encourage good practice and the use of naturally occurring evidence wherever possible.

Key skills news...

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.



The City and Guilds of London Institute
Incorporated by Royal Charter Founded 1878 Registered Charity 312832
President: HRH The Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh KG KT Hon FCGI
Chairman: David T Young FCA Hon FCGI Director-General: Chris Humphries CBE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Extra 15 minutes' reading time for Application of Number level 3 test – reminder

Following the announcements in Issues 10 and 11 of *Key skills news*, and with January's level 3 tests window in mind, could we remind you once again about the additional 15 minutes' reading time allowance recently granted to candidates taking the Application of Number level 3 test.

The formal time allowance for this test has not changed and remains at 90 minutes. The extra 15 minutes are intended to allow candidates an opportunity to read through the paper **whilst supervised** before attempting to answer any of the questions. This 15 minute period must be immediately before the test begins.

This reading allowance applies **only** the Application of Number test at level 3. No additional reading time is permitted for the Communication or ICT tests, or for Application of Number at levels 1, 2 and 4.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: www.basic-skills.org.uk

Key Skills Qualifications

Levels 1 to 4
Qualification numbers 3638, 3618 and any qualification packages including access to key skills qualifications

1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD
T +44 (0)20 7294 2468
F +44 (0)20 7294 2400
www.cityandguilds.com
www.key-skills.org

This month's news sheet contains the following information:

- Functional skills – a quick overview
- Proxy exemption – make sure you don't claim too early!
- Relationship between key skills and adult numeracy/literacy tests
- Drag queens master online testing
- 'Combined' example portfolios – coming soon
- Examiners' reports for September 2005 level 3 tests now available
- 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.

Functional skills – a quick overview

As you may already be aware, QCA have been asked by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to develop functional skills in English, Mathematics and ICT. They have also been asked to develop a single framework for personal employability, learning and thinking skills (PELTS) for 11-19 year-olds. **It is intended that functional skills and PELTS will replace the current key skills qualifications, at least in England, from 2008-09.**

The main impetus for functional skills came from the Tomlinson Report and subsequent 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper, although developments are also being informed by the Skills White Paper (Getting on in Business, Getting on at Work), the Youth Matters Green Paper and the Basic and Key Skills Convergence Project.

Functional skills will be a mandatory part of the new Specialised Diploma, and it eventually will not be possible to achieve GCSEs in English, Mathematics or ICT at grades A*-C without a functional element having been demonstrated at level 2 (or level 1 for grades D-G).

It is also envisaged that functional skills will replace the current adult literacy/numeracy/ICT qualifications developed to support the Skills for Life strategy. They will therefore need to be flexible and adaptable enough to meet the needs of a very diverse range of learners and delivery settings.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



There are inevitably a lot of unanswered questions at this stage about how functional skills will work; City & Guilds is determined exert as much influence as we can to ensure the needs of learners and employers remain paramount, and that whatever emerges is workable and fit for purpose.

Proxy exemption – make sure you don't claim too early!

Full guidance on our administrative process for checking proxy qualifications and claiming proxy exemption can be found on pages 26-27 of our key skills centre guide (available from our key-skills.org site).

Please be aware that proxy exemption is subject to a three-year 'shelf-life' – that is any key skills qualifications gained with the use of a proxy qualification **must** be completed within three years of when the proxy qualification was awarded.

To ensure the proxy qualification is still current when the key skill it is being used towards is certificated, our procedures require you to only claim proxy exemption from a test **at the same time as (or at least not before)** the portfolio it is being paired with.

All of our key skills external verifiers now receive an alert notification every time any of their centres claims a test proxy component without the portfolio component for the same qualification/level. They have been instructed to follow-up all 'early proxy' claims, and where necessary to apply the tariff of sanctions.

Despite the constraint on when proxy claims can be formally submitted to City & Guilds, we still would encourage you to check candidates' entitlement to proxy exemption as early as possible during their programme to avoid the risk of tests being taken unnecessarily. The key skills co-ordinator must maintain comprehensive records of all candidates seeking proxy exemption from any part of their key skills assessment.

Please note that other key skills awarding bodies may operate different procedures for checking and recording proxy exemption, particularly those that operate 'moderation', rather than 'verification', based quality assurance.

Relationship between key skills and adult numeracy/literacy tests

As a reminder, the key skills tests at level 1 and level 2 in Communication and Application of Number are also the national tests for the Certificates in Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy (City & Guilds qualification number 3792). The Communication tests are also used to assess the level 1-2 reading mode units within the Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (3692).

Where candidates on key skills programmes have already passed the relevant test in one of its other guises, it is not necessary to re-achieve it for their key skills qualification. The same administrative purposes as that used for proxy qualifications (see above) should be followed for any national test passes, or for any key skills test passes achieved with another awarding body.

Please note that 'actual' test passes (as distinct from other assessments used to proxy for the test) are not subject to the proxy exemption three-year 'shelf life'. Nevertheless, any

test passes gained outside of the candidate's key skills registration must be checked in exactly the same way as proxy qualifications; also, to avoid the claim being flagged with your external verifier as an 'early proxy', we would also strongly urge you only submit the claim once the portfolio it is being paired with is complete. to

You may be aware that we offer a facility for retrospectively converting Communication and/or Application of Number test passes into adult literacy/numeracy qualifications. This is intended for candidates with a test pass who have been unable to complete their key skills portfolio before the end of their programme. Further details can be found on page 61 of our key skills centre guide.

Drag queens master online testing

The size of source document used in some key skills tests sometimes makes it necessary for us to display them in a separate 'exhibit' window. We try to do this as sparingly as possible.

However, the exhibit can in almost all cases (it **will** be all cases from early January!) be dragged around the screen so candidates are able to view both the question and source material at the same time.

To move the exhibit window, candidates simply need to click on the blue bar at the top and drag it. They may occasionally encounter an exhibit with vertical and horizontal scroll bars (usually to accommodate the instructions at the top/bottom of the exhibit), although in all cases it should be possible to view the main body of the source document in one window.

Following a focus group held a couple of months ago with representatives from a number of centres, we are currently working on a number of changes intended to improve candidate performance feedback as well as the tests' on-screen appearance.

'Combined' example portfolios – coming soon

QCA will shortly be publishing a further set of example key skills portfolios, following the documents that were issued last year.

Although the original example portfolio documents have been a great help in exemplifying the minimum necessary for each qualification, they have attracted some criticism for addressing each skill area in isolation. Each of the four new example portfolios instead contains evidence covering at least three key skills qualifications (usually at different levels).

City & Guilds, with a handful of the other key skills awarding bodies, have worked closely with QCA on the production of these documents; we hope they will help to encourage good practice and the use of naturally occurring evidence wherever possible.

The portfolios will be published sometime in the New Year, initially on QCA's website, although we hope also to be able to make hard copy sets available to centres.

Examiners' reports for September 2005 level 3 tests now available

Examiner reports on candidates' performance in September's level 3 key skills tests are now available to view on our **key-skills.org** site. Reports on previous level 3 tests can also be requested by emailing **keyskills@cityandguilds.com**.

Season's greetings

Finally, being key skills co-ordinator is often a thankless task and we're very grateful for your support and co-operation throughout the past year. 2005 was supposed to be a quiet year after the new standards and other upheaval during 2004, although it hasn't quite seemed like that in practice! Please do enjoy the break (as little or as much as you manage to grab), and we look forward to continuing to work with you during 2006.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: **www.basic-skills.org.uk**

For the attention of the
key skills co-ordinator

City & 
Guilds

Issue 12 – November 2005

1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD
T +44 (0)20 7294 2468
F +44 (0)20 7294 2400
www.city-and-guilds.co.uk

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 test conduct arrangements
- Arrangements for returning test scripts and answer sheets
- Practice online ICT tests now available
- Application of Number level 3 test reading time
- Level 4 portfolio panel review – November 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.

Key skills test conduct arrangements

Please note that all key skills tests must be conducted in accordance with the guidance on pages 49-58 of our key skills centre guide. We would also advise you to refer to the Regulations for the Conduct of Examinations set out in *Providing City & Guilds Qualifications*.

Unlike most City & Guilds exams, the paper-based key skills tests may be held at any time from 00:01 to 23:59 on the date(s) shown on the front of the question paper. **On no account may paper tests take place on any other day** without our express permission. Centres requiring greater flexibility over test scheduling should consider online testing.

Please ensure candidates have access to all of the equipment and materials needed for the test they are taking. This includes **graph paper** in the case of Application of Number at levels 3 and 4.

Arrangements for returning tests scripts and answer sheets

Candidates' work and the completed Invigilation Certificate/Marksheet (ICM) must be put in the post **on the same day** as the test (the following day is acceptable if the test is held during the evening and the materials are held securely overnight).

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



The City and Guilds of London Institute
Incorporated by Royal Charter Founded 1878 Registered Charity 312832
President: HRH The Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh KG KT Hon FCGI
Chairman: David T Young FCA Hon FCGI Director-General: Chris Humphries CBE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Whilst the centre should retain its copy of the ICM, the scripts or answer sheets must **not under any circumstances** be read or copied before being dispatched.

All level 1-2 answer sheets must be returned to 'Data Processing' at the normal City & Guilds address, whereas level 3-4 scripts must be sent directly to the person named at the bottom of the ICM.

To avoid the risk of loss or damage in transit, the scripts or answer sheets must be packed carefully in a large and strong enough envelope. Please also ensure that sufficient postage is paid.

Returning scripts or answer sheets late jeopardises test security and delays the issue of results. We therefore routinely contact any centres from whom scripts have not been received within a week of the test date. We will disqualify candidates where their work has been sent late and we believe the security/integrity of the test to have been compromised.

Please note that the ICM must **always** be completed and returned, even if all of the candidates were absent from the test.

Practice online ICT tests now available

Practice online ICT tests are also now available on our **key-skills.org** site in addition to the Communication and Application of Number tests we advised about in Issue 11 of *Key skills news*. These practice tests are presented in HTML Flash format and are designed to simulate the GOLLA on-screen test environment and enable candidates to practise test navigation.

Note the tests can be displayed 'full screen' by pressing F11.

Application of Number level 3 test reading time

Following the information we gave in Issue 11 of *Key skills news*, please be aware that candidates taking the Application of Number level 3 test are now entitled to a further 15 minutes' reading time.

Further instructions on how this should be applied have been given in a notice attached to each packet of Application of Number level 3 question paper. Please ensure this is acted upon if you have any candidates taking November's AoN level 3 test.

This additional time allowance **only** applies to the Application of Number level 3 test. No additional reading time is allowed for the AoN tests at any other level, or for any of the Communication or ICT tests.

Level 4 portfolio panel review – November 2005

The closing date for receiving any level 4 portfolios for the November 2005 panel review is **Tuesday 22 November**. Please email **keyskills@cityandguilds.com** and contact your external verifier if you have one or more candidates working towards any of the level 4 key

skills qualifications and have not received a letter from us outlining the arrangements for the November panel review.

As we have indicated in previous issues of *Key skills news*, our level 4 panel review carries out a 100% sample. **All level 4 portfolios must be submitted to the panel before certification may be claimed.**

The next panel review meeting will take place in June 2006.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: **www.basic-skills.org.uk**

This page is intentionally blank

For the attention of the
key skills co-ordinator

City & Guilds

Issue 11 – October 2005

1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD
T +44 (0)20 7294 2468
F +44 (0)20 7294 2400
www.city-and-guilds.co.uk

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:

- Application of Number level 3 test – additional 15 minutes' reading time
- Practice online tests now available on *key-skills.org* site
- New administrative arrangements for 3638 candidates achieving under the 2000 specs – a reminder
- Level 4 portfolio review panel – November 2005
- Skills for Life news

'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.

Application of Number level 3 test – additional 15 minutes' reading time

The regulatory authorities (QCA, ACCAC and CCEA) have announced an additional 15 minutes' reading time for candidates sitting the Application of Number level 3 test. This is effective from the **November 2005** series.

The test length has not changed and the formal time allowance remains at 90 minutes. This additional 15 minute period is simply to allow candidates an opportunity to read through the paper **whilst supervised** before attempting to answer any of the questions. The reading period must be immediately before the test begins.

This change affects **only** the Application of Number test at level 3. No additional reading time is permitted for the Communication or ICT tests, or for Application of Number at levels 1, 2 and 4.

Practice online tests now available on *key-skills.org* site
Example versions of the level 1-2 **Communication** and **Application of Number** tests, designed to simulate City & Guilds' online tests, are now available on our **key-skills.org** site (previously they were only available on SmartScreen).

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is true and correct at time of going to press. However, City & Guilds products and services are subject to continuous development and improvement and the right is reserved to change Products and services from time to time. City & Guilds cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of information in publication. City & Guilds is a registered charity established to promote education and training.

Key skills news...



The City and Guilds of London Institute
Incorporated by Royal Charter Founded 1878 Registered Charity 312832
President: HRH The Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh KG KT Hon FCGI
Chairman: David T Young FCA Hon FCGI Director-General: Chris Humphries CBE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



The tests are intended to help learners familiarise themselves with how the key skills tests are presented and navigated when taken on the GOLA system. The tests are in HTML Flash format, although they replicate the GOLA on-screen environment as far as possible.

The only significant difference is in how the performance 'score' reporting is presented at the end of the test – these are far more detailed than the feedback given to candidates taking a live online test, and in some cases include tips as to why the given answer was incorrect.

For the moment only practice Communication and Application of Number tests are available in this format, although we hope to add some practice online ICT tests to the site over the next few months.

We are still working to improve the live tests' navigation and feedback – we'll keep you informed about how this is progressing via *Key skills news*.

New administrative arrangements for 3638 candidates achieving under the 2000 specs – a reminder

In the last issue of *Key skills news* we announced changes to the administrative procedures for certificating candidates registered via scheme 3638 for achievement under the 2000 key skills specifications. Please be aware that claims for these components (002, 004, etc) can no longer be made via the Walled Garden, and **must** be accompanied by a declaration form. The form is available from the home page of our **key-skills.org** site.

These arrangements only affect candidates on scheme 3638; the declaration form is not required where candidates are registered under scheme 3618 (these candidates need to be re-registered if they wish to access the 2004 standards).

Level 4 portfolio review panel – November 2005

The next level 4 portfolio review panel will take place at the end of November.

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

Please inform your external verifier **immediately** if you have any candidates working towards level 4 key skills qualifications. This will enable us to ensure you receive information about the arrangements for submitting portfolios to the panel.

Skills for Life news

Finally, *Key skills news* now has a sibling! The first issue of *Skills for Life news* is now available from our **basic-skills.org.uk** site.

Skills for Life news will be published every month and will feature information about each of City & Guilds' learner qualifications designed to support the Skills for Life strategy and

the equivalent national strategies in Wales and Northern Ireland. As with *Key skills news*, a full archive will be maintained on the website.

Issue 01 of *Skills for Life news* includes information about our new Entry Level ICT Skills for Life qualification which has now been accredited.

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

Information about our Skills for Life learner and practitioner qualifications can be found on this dedicated City & Guilds website: www.basic-skills.org.uk