

# The RSL How to Guides

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## What is Controlled External Assessment?

Controlled External Assessment is a form of assessment in which question papers, assignments and tasks are specified by RSL in Controlled External Assessment briefs. Controlled External Assessment briefs are available to download by centres with learners registered on the externally assessed unit on the date in the Key Dates calendar.

Controlled External Assessment briefs are created by RSL, not written within the centre. Learners are asked to respond to a brief with a specific context, over a mandated period of time to test their newly acquired knowledge and skills.

The tasks are conducted under RSL specified controlled conditions within the vocational centre. The work is uploaded onto the RSL Administration Site at <https://cloud.rslawards.com> by the published deadline and the marking of this work undertaken by RSL External Assessors. The work is not assessed or internally verified within the centre.

Controlled External Assessment does not include external quality assurance or verification of centre-based assessment undertaken by RSL.

For identification of Externally Assessed units, please refer to the syllabus documents and Appendix 1: Which Units are Externally Assessed.

## Guidance from RSL

Due to the nature of external assessment, RSL cannot provide specific guidance on the context of the Controlled Externally Assessed brief or the appropriateness of the individual learner work.

If we were to give advice about the content of the briefs or how individual learners can access criteria, this would be advantaging some learners over others and so we cannot provide this level of guidance.

If there were a recurring confusion over a particular issue, guidance would be issued from Head Office to clarify this so that all learners have the same information.

## Prior to the Release of Controlled External Assessment Briefs

Controlled External Assessment briefs are only released to centres with learners registered on the externally assessed unit for the current assessment year. You can check your registrations on the RSL Administration Site at <https://cloud.rslawards.com>. You are looking to see that the 'Assessment Year' next to the externally assessed unit is the current assessment year (i.e. 2018/19.)

If the assessment year is incorrect and you were intending to deliver the Controlled External Assessment for the current academic year, please complete a '[Change to Registration Confirmation Form](#)' which can be found on our website here - <https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/> and return the form to [vocational@rslawards.com](mailto:vocational@rslawards.com). Please note that change to registrations can take up to 5 working days to process.

If your learners are not registered for the Controlled External Assessment for this academic year, you will not receive the Controlled External Assessment briefs this academic year. The briefs from the current academic year will be made available as examples at the start of the next academic year, once all assessment has been completed for this brief.

Please ensure that all learners are registered prior to the start of the Controlled External Assessment window. If learners are not registered by the start date of the Controlled External Assessment window as identified in the Key Dates calendar, they are not eligible for the Controlled External Assessment for this academic year and any work produced may not be accepted. Please refer to the [RSL VQ Registration and Certification Policy](#) for guidance on registrations.

## Release of Controlled External Assessment Briefs

The Controlled External Assessment briefs will be released to centres with learners registered on the externally assessed units on the date as identified in the Key Dates calendar.

For the security of the Controlled External Assessment briefs, they will be uploaded to the '[External Assessment](#)' area in the RSL Administration Site at <https://cloud.rslawards.com> and will be available to download from the date in the Key Date calendar. The Controlled External Assessment briefs will **not** be sent via email.

If there are staff members in your centre who need access to the briefs but do not have a login for the RSL Administration Site, the Quality Representative (or centre administrator) can create an account for them by following the steps in Appendix 2: [Adding a Tutor](#) to the RSL Administration Site at <https://cloud.rslawards.com>

From the date in the Key Dates calendar, briefs can be accessed through the '[External Assessment](#)' option in the drop-down menu in the top right of your screen once you have signed in at the RSL Administration Site at <https://cloud.rslawards.com>. There will be an option for 'Download Controlled External Assessment Briefs' and you will be able to access and download the briefs you have learners registered on for this academic year.

## The Storing of Controlled External Assessment Briefs

The Controlled External Assessment briefs are confidential assessment materials and must be stored securely within the centre. The following applies:

- The Controlled External Assessment brief is a confidential document and cannot be shared with anyone other than learners in your centre who are registered on the programme and the staff supervising the assessment.
- The Controlled External Assessment briefs cannot be shared with anyone outside of the centre, even if they are an RSL approved centre.
- The Controlled External Assessment briefs must remain inside the centre and under supervision of an appropriate member of staff at all times. They cannot be taken out of the centre under any circumstance.
- Learners can only use the Controlled External Assessment briefs within the timetabled sessions. They cannot take them home.
- Information about the content of the Controlled External Assessment briefs cannot be shared in any capacity, including the use of any created support or teaching materials.
- When not in use, the Controlled External Assessment briefs must be stored securely in an appropriate location in the centre.

The sharing of confidential assessment materials with anyone but the centre that the Controlled External Assessment brief has been issued to is a breach of the Ofqual Conditions of Recognition and will result in an investigation into the centre who has received the brief and the centre who has shared the materials with them. The sharing of confidential assessment materials also breaches the centre agreement and RSL policy and procedure.

Please refer to your centre policy and JCQ Guidance about the correct storing of confidential assessment materials.

## Preparing Learners for Controlled External Assessment

For the purpose of running Controlled External Assessment, a centre needs a responsible, named member of staff. This is usually the Quality Representative but you may choose your Exams Officer who effectively supervises the controlled period of assessment and validates all the evidence submitted to the RSL Administration System at <https://cloud.rslawards.com>.

Learners can be supported to 'revise' for their Controlled External Assessment. Some centres explore areas such as:

- How to respond to a Controlled External Assessment i.e. how to approach an answer.
- How to read and interpret a Controlled External Assessment brief including the use of assessment and grading criteria.
- Techniques of research and making the best use of the time given.
- How to present research in a Controlled External Assessment, including the use of references.
- Skills of analysis and evaluation.

Some centres use 'mock' assessments prior to the Controlled External Assessment window to prepare their learners for what they are likely to see, however, this is not a requirement.

## Conducting the Controlled External Assessment

There are two elements to conducting the Controlled External Assessment:

- 1) Preparation Period.
- 2) Controlled External Assessment window.

### 1) Preparation Period

Preparation time is allocated as per the Controlled External Assessment brief and the relevant specifications. Work **cannot** be produced towards the controlled assessment at this stage.

During the preparation period, the learners have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have of their teachers regarding the Controlled External Assessment. Once the Controlled External Assessment begins, the learners cannot ask their teachers for clarification.

It is important to ensure that the learners have all the important information they need in order to be successful in their assessment. This includes the following:

- Ensure learners understand the scenario of the Controlled External Assessment brief and that the work produced needs to fit in with the scenario.
- Ensure learners are clear about the evidence limits for each learning outcome and the consequences if they exceed them/do not meet them (see Appendix 3: Evidence Limits.)
- Learners are allowed access to the internet and can conduct research within the preparation time.
- It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure learners are taught how to reference and how to avoid plagiarism.
- Learners must make sure they keep a record of their sources in the research phase.
- The use of templates is strongly discouraged as this makes authenticity of work difficult. If learners are all using the same template, they will produce very similar work which will not demonstrate individual learner contribution.

Learners must understand (and will be required to sign a document to demonstrate that):

- Work needs to be authentic and the penalties of plagiarism.
- That they must reference any research that they have undertaken in their final submission.
- That they must work independently unless otherwise stated by the Controlled External Assessment brief.

## 2) Controlled External Assessment window

From the date identified in the Key Dates calendar (available [here](#)), learners can produce evidence for Controlled External Assessment.

Set tasks and performances have both a timetabled period during which the task must be completed and a deadline for the submission of work which can be seen on the Key Dates Calendar (available [here](#)). As a centre you are free to timetable your Controlled External Assessment at any time within the time specified by RSL.

- All work completed for the Controlled External Assessment must be new material created within this window to this specific brief.
- As long as the hours specified in the brief are completed under controlled conditions, the way they are structured is down to the centre i.e. a session a week, chunk of intensive time.
- The briefs contain guidance for how long should be spent on each task but these are recommended – RSL are concerned with the overall time.
- External invigilators are not needed but learners must be monitored by a member of teaching staff and in their sight at all times.
- Learner work must be stored securely between assessment sessions.
- Ensure learners save their work securely throughout the Controlled External Assessment period
- Teaching staff must keep a log of time spent on each outcome.
- Ensure that you have a clock on display at all times during the Controlled External Assessment. All learners must be told when the Controlled External Assessment time starts and how long they have.
- Ensure that you have cleared any charts, diagrams etc. from the walls.
- All learner's work must be authentic and therefore staff cannot intervene to change anything.

All learners must understand:

- That their work needs to be authentic and the penalties of plagiarism.
- That they must reference any research that they have undertaken in their final submission.
- That they must work independently unless otherwise stated by the Controlled External Assessment brief.

If you are in any doubt please refer to the specification and the Controlled External Assessment Brief(s).

## Levels of Control

The level of control depends upon the different sections of the Controlled External Assessment. The sample assessment material that RSL issues will give you information on this, however, as guidance it is recommended that:

During the preparation period:

- There needs to be sufficient supervision to ensure the work can be authenticated as the learner's own.
- Use of resources including the internet is permitted but must be referenced.
- Interaction with other learners is permitted but work must be authenticated as the learner's own.
- Time is restricted to the allocated period stated in the brief.
- Teaching staff may provide direction and general advice as required.
- This is the opportunity for learners to ask questions.

During the Controlled External Assessment time:

- Learners must complete work within direct sight of a supervisor(s) throughout the assessment.
- If rehearsing in separate rooms, each room must be supervised. Learners cannot rehearse in their own time.
- Limited amount of time as specified in brief.
- Complete work independently. There is interaction with other learners only for the purposes indicated in the Controlled External Assessment brief. All work submitted must be attributable to the individual learner.
- No access to email, the internet or mobile phones unless explicitly stated by the controlled assessment.
- Centre must ensure learners have access to materials and resources as defined in the Controlled External Assessment. Any other materials which may provide assistance are removed or covered.
- No feedback can be provided to the learner throughout the Controlled External Assessment period unless specified in the brief.
- Teachers cannot guide learners in their response to the brief. Part of the Controlled External Assessment is examining the learner's ability to interpret and respond to the brief.
- Teachers cannot provide model answers or writing frames specific to the task (such as outlines, paragraph headings or section headings.)
- Guidance cannot be given on errors or omissions made by the learner in the research/preparation or detailed feedback in relation to the assessment criteria.
- In the event of a natural disaster, it is down to the centre to make up the time within the Controlled External Assessment window.

## Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments

**Reasonable Adjustments:** Long term conditions such as dyslexia.

- These are managed within the centre.
- Evidence of the reasonable adjustment must be submitted alongside the Controlled External Assessment evidence in an '[Evidence of Reasonable Adjustment Applied for Vocational Qualifications](#)' form.
- Any additional time must be given within the window and logged on the Controlled External Assessment log.

**Special Considerations:** Short term conditions which cannot be planned for

- Granted for temporary illness or indisposition.
- Centre to provide sufficient information to RSL about the disability, illness and or other circumstance which would allow RSL to make a decision about how to process the application. Please also provide what special consideration is required i.e. extra time.
- Loss of work - Learners who have lost work may be eligible for special considerations. If learner's work has been lost due to reasons outside their control (i.e. not their own negligence) then they will be eligible for special considerations.
- The application must be made prior to the end of the Controlled External Assessment window.

The [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy](https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/) available on our website here - <https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>

## Absence from Assessment

Illness during Controlled External Assessment

- Learners who fall ill during the Controlled External Assessment can return to complete the remaining time left on the task when they have recovered, provided that is within the Controlled External Assessment Window.

Learners unable to complete a task within a specified window

- If learners are unable to complete the given tasks within the Controlled External Assessment window, the centre will need to apply to RSL for special considerations.

## Submission of Evidence

All evidence to be submitted to the RSL Administration Site at <https://cloud.rslawards.com> by the date identified in the Key Dates calendar (available [here](#))

Documents to be submitted are:

- Controlled External Assessment log of hours, signed by the tutor.



- Learner Declaration Form for each externally assessed unit submitted, signed by the learner.
- Learner work – correctly labelled with learner name, centre name and task number.
- Identification of learners.

#### *Uploading Evidence:*

- Learner work will be uploaded against the learner registration on <https://cloud.rslawards.com/secure/vocational/external-assessments> (please see Appendix 4: How to upload against a learner registration)
- Check the Controlled External Assessment briefs and the cloud.rslawards.com website for guidance on file types and evidence types. For technology units, the DAW files do not need to be uploaded unless specifically stated in the brief.
- Please allow sufficient time to upload the files prior to the deadline. The speed at which the files upload will depend on your centre's web speed. Zip files will take longer to upload than individual files. During the submission window, RSL will increase the bandwidth to support.
- External links are not allowed for externally assessed units. If links are provided, the work will not be assessed.
- You will not be able to delete files once they are uploaded so please make sure you upload the correct ones.

#### *Video Evidence:*

- Video of multiple learners i.e. a band can be uploaded once (rather than against every learner registration) but it must be made explicitly clear which learners are in the video.
- Time lapse footage can be used for units where there are elements such as the setting up of equipment.
- Video evidence can be edited to include evidence of who is who. It cannot be edited to change the nature of the performance.

#### *Identification of Learners*

- It is vital that sufficient information is given to allow the assessor to identify the learner, particularly in video footage.
- Please remember that the assessor does not know the learners and will need clear guidance to be able to recognise them. If the learner cannot be identified, they cannot be graded.
- Ways to provide identification could include:
  - A written document identifying features such as what learners are wearing, what time they enter the stage etc. For MUSPRA, their instrument would be an identifying feature, for CAPA, their character.
  - Video footage could be edited to identify the learners on screen.
  - Learners could introduce themselves at the start of the video (make a judgement about whether this would detract from the performance.)
- Please ensure the name of the learner on their work is their full name (no nicknames) and the name that they are registered under on the [RSL Administration Site](#).

## Results Released

- The work is assessed by RSL.
- Site will say 'pending' until the release dates identified in the Key Dates calendar.
- If files are found to be corrupt, we will contact the centre and ask them to complete a 'Corrupt Evidence Declaration.' Following the submission of the declaration, we would allow a short window to reupload the work. If work isn't submitted within the Controlled External Assessment window, that is a separate issue to finding corrupt evidence.
- It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all files have been uploaded prior to the deadline. If no work is submitted within the Controlled External Assessment window, learners cannot resit.
- Results and external assessment report forms will be available on [RSL Administration Site](#) by the date and time identified in the key dates calendar.
- If there is a problem with results, please look at the Vocational Qualifications Appeals policy in the first instance rather than directly contacting Head Office.

## Resits

When a learner does not achieve a Pass grade for one or more learning outcomes within an externally assessed unit, they are permitted to resit the unclassified learning outcomes within the same academic year in which they sat the Controlled External Assessment.

In exceptional circumstances, learners who did not take up the resit opportunity during their time at their centre may be offered an opportunity to resit outside the programme time in the following academic year. This is the exception rather than the rule.

## Resits within the academic year

- Only available for unclassified learning outcomes. If a learner has passed all learning outcomes, they are not eligible to resit.
- A 'VQ Resit Registration Form' will be available on our main website [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com) This must be completed fully and returned to [vocational@rslawards.com](mailto:vocational@rslawards.com) by the date and time identified on the Key Dates Calendar. Failure to do so will result in learners not being permitted to take part in the assessment.
- Please note, if a learner's result is being appealed, they are not eligible for a resit opportunity. Please refer to the RSL Appeals Policy Vocational Qualifications for more information - <https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>
- Confirmation of learner's eligibility to resit will be identified against the learner registration on <https://cloud.rslawards.com> prior to the start of the resit window.

- The resit window for learners who have registered for a resit opportunity will open on the date identified in the Key Dates Calendar.
- Learners will work to the same Controlled External Assessment brief as their first attempt. The hours required are those as specified for the learning outcome in the controlled assessment brief. **A controlled assessment log will need to be kept for the hours used in the resit opportunity.**
- Learner work for the resit opportunity must be uploaded to <https://cloud.rslawards.com> by the date and time specified in the Key Dates Calendar.
- **Controlled assessment logs and learner declaration forms for the resits will need to be provided in the same way that these were required for the first submission for Controlled External Assessment.** We will be unable to release resit results if these documents are not submitted.
- Results will be released with the qualification results on the date identified in the Key Dates Calendar. If the resit remains unclassified, the overall qualification will remain unclassified.
- No additional resit opportunities will be given.

For more guidance on Resits, please refer to the [Resit Policy](https://www.rslawards.com/vocational/deliver-qualifications/) available on our website at <https://www.rslawards.com/vocational/deliver-qualifications/>

## Retakes

Following guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), there is an additional Retake opportunity for **Level 3 learners only**.

In order for learners to participate in the retake,

- Open to all currently registered Level 3 learners who sat externally assessed units in the previous academic year, regardless of the grade achieved or if they have already had a resit opportunity.
- Learners must retake a whole assessment (from a new RSL produced brief) rather than individual learning outcomes.
- The results are uncapped.
- The retake opportunity will be given in the Controlled Externally Assessed window and the results released as per the Key Dates Calendar.

- Learners who participate in a retake will not be offered a further resit opportunity following the retake.
- Learners must be registered for the Controlled External Assessment for this academic year in order to receive the assignment brief of the retake opportunity. The brief will be the same as the Controlled External Assessment brief for the current academic year.

For more detailed information about Resits and Retakes, including FAQs, please refer to our VQ Resit and Retake Policy available [here](#).

## Malpractice

Any centre suspected of malpractice will be rigorously investigated by RSL and may be subject to sanctions.

Malpractice in Controlled External Assessment is:

- Plagiarism of any nature by candidates.
- Collusion of examiners with candidates
- Disclosure of confidential information by centres or examiners to candidates.
- Breaches of confidentiality and security of assessment materials.
- Submission of false information to gain a proxy or a qualification.
- Disruptive behaviour by candidates.
- Failure to adhere to the requirements of our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.
- Maladministration: any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with regulations.
- Further details can be found in the Sanctions Policy which can be found here

<https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>

### Further Reading:

RSL Vocational Centre Handbook (available [here](#))

RSL Key Dates Calendar (available [here](#))

[HTG Using the cloud.rslawards.com site.](#)

## Appendix 1: Which Units are Externally Assessed?

Level 1 Music Practitioner: Certificate	
Unit Number	Unit Title
102ta	Live Music Performance
103ta	Music Sequencing and Production

Level 2 Music Practitioner: Certificate	
Unit Number	Unit Title
202ta	Live Music Performance
203ta	Music Sequencing and Production

Level 3 Music Practitioner: Subsidiary Diploma	
Unit Number	Unit Title
387	Rehearsal Skills and Live Music Performance
388	Live Sound Recording and Sound Reinforcement
389	Music Promotion and Event Management
390	Composing Styles and Music Sequencing

Level 3 Music Practitioner: Extended Diploma	
Unit Number	Unit Title
391	Composing Collaboration and Recorded Performance
392	Studio Sound Recording and Mixing
393	Setting Up a Music Business and Selling Music
394	Composing Music Solo and Remixing and Production

Level 1 Creative and Performing Arts: Certificate	
Unit Number	Unit Title
101	Live Performance

Level 2 Creative and Performing Arts: Certificate	
Unit Number	Unit Title
201	Live Performance
204	Final Production

Level 3 Creative and Performing Arts: Diploma	
Unit Number	Unit Title
304	Performance Preparation

Level 3 Creative and Performing Arts: Extended Diploma	
Unit Number	Unit Title
304	Performance Preparation
305	Final Production

## Appendix 2: FAQs for External Assessment.

### 1. How is controlled external assessment different to internal assessment?

For external assessment the assignment brief is written by RSL, delivered within the centre under exam conditions and then submitted to RSL for assessment.

For internal assessment, assignment briefs are written within the centre and assessment and internal verification are conducted within the centre.

### 2. How does the learner know what they need to do for controlled external assessment?

RSL will provide a controlled external assessment brief on the date specified in the Key Dates Calendar. This brief has tasks which the learner must complete in order to pass the assessment.

### 3. How can we prepare the learner for the controlled external assessment prior to the brief being released?

If you refer to the syllabus documents for the controlled external assessment, you can see the assessment and grading criteria for the unit. You can use these as the basis for teaching learners the skills they will need to pass the unit. You can also support learners to revise by exploring areas such as:

- How to respond to a Controlled External Assessment i.e. how to approach an answer.
- How to read and interpret a Controlled External Assessment brief including the use of assessment and grading criteria.
- Techniques of research and making the best use of the time given.
- How to present research in a Controlled External Assessment, including the use of references.
- Skills of analysis and evaluation.

You could also use a mock assessment prior to the Controlled External Assessment window. The previous year's briefs will be available via the Help and Support (to be renamed Resources in 20/21) section for guidance.

### 4. How do we get the controlled external assessment brief?

The Controlled External Assessment briefs will be released to centres with learners registered on the externally assessed units on the date as identified in the Key Dates calendar.

For the security of the Controlled External Assessment briefs, they will be uploaded to the '[External Assessment](#)' area in the RSL Online Submission System at <https://cloud.rslawards.com> and will be available to download from the date in the Key Date calendar. The Controlled External Assessment briefs will **not** be sent via email.

If there are staff members in your centre who need access to the briefs but do not have a login for the RSL Online Submission System, the Quality Representative (or centre administrator) can create an account for them.

From the date in the Key Dates calendar, briefs can be accessed through the '[External Assessment](#)' option in the drop-down menu in the top right of your screen once you have signed in at the RSL Online Submission System at <https://cloud.rslawards.com>. There will be an option for 'Download Controlled External Assessment Briefs' and you will be able to access and download the briefs you have learners registered on for this academic year.

**5. When can we show the controlled external assessment brief to students after it has been released?**

You can share the brief with the learners as soon as it has been released. They cannot take the brief home. They also cannot start preparing evidence for assessment prior to the start of the Controlled External Assessment window.

**6. How do we store the controlled external assessment brief?**

Controlled External Assessment briefs are confidential assessment materials and must be stored securely within the centre, in the same way that you would an exam paper. Please refer to your centre policy and JCQ Guidance about the correct storing of confidential assessment materials.

The following applies:

- The Controlled External Assessment brief is a confidential document and cannot be shared with anyone other than learners in your centre who are registered on the programme and the staff supervising the assessment.
- The Controlled External Assessment briefs cannot be shared with anyone outside of the centre, even if they are an RSL approved centre.
- The Controlled External Assessment briefs must remain inside the centre and under supervision of an appropriate member of staff at all times. They cannot be taken out of the centre under any circumstance.
- Learners can only use the Controlled External Assessment briefs within the timetabled sessions. They cannot take them home.
- Information about the content of the Controlled External Assessment briefs cannot be shared in any capacity, including the use of any created support or teaching materials.
- When not in use, the Controlled External Assessment briefs must be stored securely in an appropriate location in the centre.



**7. Can we give the controlled external assessment brief to learners to take home or put it on my centre's VLE?**

No. Confidential assessment materials must be kept under the supervision of the staff involved in the assessment at all times. They must be collected back from students at the end of each lesson and cannot be placed onto a VLE.

**8. Can we send the brief to a teacher in another centre?**

Under no circumstances can a brief be sent to another member of staff, either internal or external to your centre. This also applies to other centres as part of the same chain/company as you.

The sharing of confidential assessment materials with anyone but the centre that the Controlled External Assessment brief has been issued to is a breach of the Ofqual Conditions of Recognition and will result in an investigation into the centre who has received the brief and the centre who has shared the materials with them. The sharing of confidential assessment materials also breaches the centre agreement and RSL policy and procedure.

**9. Does the preparation time have to be supervised?**

There needs to be sufficient supervision to ensure the work can be authenticated as belonging to the learner.

**10. Can learners produce evidence towards the controlled external assessment in the preparation time?**

No. The preparation time should be used to research, generate ideas and ask teachers for direction and general advice as required.

**11. Can the work collated in the preparation time be used in the controlled external assessment window?**

Yes. The research conducted in the preparation window is designed to support the work generated in the controlled external assessment window. Actual evidence that will be submitted should not start to be generated until the start of the controlled external assessment window.

**12. Can we make templates for the learners to complete during the process?**

The use of templates is strongly discouraged as this makes authenticity of work difficult. If learners are all using the same template, they will produce very similar work which will not demonstrate individual learner contribution.

**13. Can we give the learner's feedback throughout the process?**

During the preparation period, teachers can provide feedback to learners and answer their questions. During the controlled external assessment window, you cannot provide feedback to learners unless it is explicitly asked for in the controlled external assessment brief.

**14. What feedback is allowed?**

In some of the controlled external assessment briefs, 'response to feedback' is required in order to achieve the criteria. In these instances, feedback can be given to the learner on their performance/composition.

Guidance cannot be given on errors or omissions made by the learner in the research/preparation or detailed feedback in relation to the assessment criteria.

**15. Do all the sessions during the controlled external assessment have to be supervised?**

Yes. External invigilators are not needed but learners must be monitored by a member of teaching staff and in their sight at all times.

**16. If we have several groups of learners working in separate rehearsal rooms, does each room need to be supervised by a member of staff?**

Yes. Controlled external assessment must be supervised at all time. When planning for controlled external assessment delivery in your centre, please ensure you have sufficient resource to facilitate this.

**17. Can learners rehearse in their own time?**

No. All work for controlled external assessment must be conducted under supervised conditions.

**18. Can learners work in groups?**

Yes.

**19. If they work in groups, are they able to produce the same evidence for all members of the group?**

No. Learners must complete work independently. There is interaction with other learners only for the purposes indicated in the Controlled External Assessment brief. All work submitted must be attributable to the individual learner.

**20. Can the teacher perform as part of a band?**

Yes, if there is not sufficient expertise amongst the students, for example if no students play keyboards and a keyboard player is needed. The teacher cannot provide advantage for learners by performing with them.

**21. What size does an audience need to be?**

For the purposes of assessment, an audience can be defined by one or more people. Please bear in mind that the students will have a greater experience if they can perform to a larger audience.

**22. If a student needs to access the internet during the controlled external assessment window (for example, they need to change a song) are they allowed to do this?**

There is no access to email, the internet or mobile phones unless explicitly stated by the controlled assessment. In the exceptional circumstance where a learner needs to

change a song during the controlled external assessment window, they will be allowed access to the internet only under supervised tutor guidance.

### **23. How do we manage reasonable adjustments?**

Centres are expected to manage their own reasonable adjustments within their centre. For example, if a learner needs extra time due to a dyslexia diagnosis, the centre will facilitate this and log the hours within the controlled assessment log.

When uploading the learner's work for controlled external assessment, you will need to submit an 'Evidence of Reasonable Adjustment Applied for Vocational Qualifications' form with the learner work.

### **24. What do we do if an unforeseen circumstance arises which affects the learner's performance?**

Please refer to our [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy](#), referring to the Special Considerations part of the policy.

Please note that special considerations applications cannot be considered for:

- Requests received after the published submission date.
- Illness or other issues during the course that did not manifest themselves during the assessment window.
- Bereavement occurring more than 6 months before the start of the assessment, unless there are ongoing implications such as an inquest or court case.
- The failure of the centre to prepare candidates for whatever reason.
- Requests for marks to be adjusted due to illness or injury affecting performance that has been submitted for assessment.

### **25. What is a learner declaration?**

A learner declaration is a form signed by a learner which declares that they understand the following:

- That their work needs to be authentic and the penalties of plagiarism.
- That they must reference any research that they have undertaken in their final submission.
- That they must work independently unless otherwise stated by the Controlled External Assessment brief.

A template is provided by RSL and available from the same place that the Controlled External Assessment briefs are downloaded from. The template is also available from the 'Templates' section of 'Help and Support.' (to be renamed Resources in 20/21) Grades for controlled external assessment cannot be released without this authentication. If the learner declaration is not uploaded with the controlled external assessment, you will be asked for it before we can release grades.

**26. Why do they have to submit a learner declaration?**

The learner declaration is to confirm that all work submitted for the learner is their own work. Signing the learner declaration means the learner is authenticating their work.

**27. Does the learner have to physically sign the declaration or can it be a typed signature?**

As long as the document is completed by the learner, the signature can be typed.

**28. Where do we find the learner declaration template?**

A template is provided by RSL and available from the same place that the Controlled External Assessment briefs are downloaded from. The template is also available from the 'Templates' section of 'Help and Support.' (to be renamed Resources in 20/21)

**29. What is a controlled external assessment log?**

The controlled external assessment log is a log of the hours spent on the controlled external assessment. This must be completed by the supervisor of the assessment and submitted along with the learner work.

**30. Why do they we have to submit a controlled external assessment log?**

There are specific hours associated with the controlled external assessment and the log demonstrates that the correct number of hours have been spent on the assessment.

**31. Do we log the preparation time in the controlled external assessment log?**

No, you only need to log the time taken in the controlled external assessment window.

**32. What happens if we do not submit a controlled external assessment log and/or learner declaration?**

You will be asked for them and results cannot be released without them. This could result in a delay to the results being made available to you.

**33. How do we know what evidence the learner needs to produce?**

The controlled external assessment brief has tasks which explain what the learner needs to do to achieve the assessment criteria. There is also an 'External Assessment Checklist' page in the controlled external assessment brief which lists the evidence needed.

**34. What are maximum evidence limits?**

Each assignment brief has maximum evidence limits which is the maximum amount of evidence which a learner can produce. Each learning outcome has a maximum evidence limit associated with it.

**35. What happens if the learner exceeds the maximum evidence limits?**

A 20% leeway above the evidence limits will be taken into account by the assessor. If this leeway is exceeded, the assessor will assess the work only up until the leeway.

**36. What are identification documents?**

With performance-based qualifications, the assessor needs help to be able to tell which learner is which. Please remember that the assessor does not know the learners and will need clear guidance to be able to recognise them. If the learner cannot be identified, they cannot be graded.

Ways to provide identification could include:

- A written document identifying features such as what learners are wearing, what time they enter the stage etc. For MUSPRA, their instrument would be an identifying feature, for CAPA, their character.
- Video footage could be edited to identify the learners on screen.
- Learners could introduce themselves at the start of the video (make a judgement about whether this would detract from the performance.)

**37. If multiple learners are in the same video evidence, does the video have to be uploaded against each learner?**

No. Video of multiple learners i.e. a band can be uploaded once (rather than against every learner registration) but it must be made explicitly clear which learners are in the video.

**38. Where do we upload the learner work?**

All evidence must be submitted to the RSL Administration Site at <https://cloud.rslawards.com> by the date identified in the Key Dates calendar. The evidence must be uploaded against the learner registration. Please refer to Appendix 4: How to upload against a learner registration for more details.

**39. How do we know the work has been uploaded?**

You will see a 'Success' page. The Status' column in the learner registration will change to 'File(s) uploaded.'

Please make sure you have checked all files have been uploaded.

**40. We have uploaded work and the status is set as Pending. What does that mean?**

Pending is the status that will be set while the work is being assessed. On the date of results release in the Key Dates Calendar, this will change to the grade awarded.

**41. The deadline has passed and we've realised a document was not included in the submission of work for controlled external assessment. What do we do?**

Please contact [vocational@rslawards.com](mailto:vocational@rslawards.com) outlining what is missing and which learner it impacts. We will provide you with a missed submission declaration which will need to be completed and returned to RSL. We will then review the document and decide

whether the work can be accepted. If it can be accepted, we will give you a time frame in which to upload the work.

## Appendix 2: FAQs for Resits

*Please note the majority of the FAQs refer to Resits within the academic year.*

### 1. What is the Resit window?

The Resit window is the time period in which a learner who does not achieve a Pass grade for one or more learning outcomes within an externally assessed unit is permitted to resit the unclassified learning outcomes within the same academic year in which they sat the Controlled External Assessment.

### 2. What is the difference between Resit, Retake and Resubmission?

**Resits:** For unclassified grades from external assessment. Learners are able to resit the specific learning outcomes they did not pass. This applies to all levels of qualification. Resits are capped at a pass.

**Retake:** For Level 3 learners who are completing their qualification in the current academic year. It is open to all currently registered Level 3 learners who sat externally assessed units in the previous academic year, regardless of grade achieved. They must retake the whole assessment (from a new RSL produced brief) rather than individual learning outcomes. The results will not be capped.

**Resubmission:** This is for all levels of qualification and applies to internally assessed units.

All policies for the above can be found on our website at <https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>

### 3. What is the difference between resits within the academic year and resits outside the academic year?

**Resits within the academic year** – This will apply to the majority of learners. Resits must be completed within the academic year in which the External Controlled Assessment was completed.

**Resits outside the academic year** - In exceptional circumstances, learners who did not take up the Resit opportunity during their time at their centre may be offered an opportunity to Resit outside the programme time in the following academic year. This would be once the learner has left the centre and the centre must make sure the learner is registered and that they are able to support this.

### 4. How do I register my learners for the resit window?

You can find a 'VQ Resit Registration Form' on our website. This must be completed fully and returned to [vocational@rslawards.com](mailto:vocational@rslawards.com) by the date and time identified in the Key Dates

Calendar. Failure to do so will result in learners not being permitted to take part in the resit window.

**5. Will my learners automatically be eligible if I send the Resit application in?**

No. Learners are only eligible to resit unclassified learning outcomes. If they have received a grade for the outcome, they will not be eligible to resit.

**6. How will I know if my learners have been accepted for the resit opportunity?**

This will be identified against the learner registration on the [cloud.rslawards.com](https://cloud.rslawards.com) site prior to the start of the resit window.

**7. Do they use the same Controlled External Assessment brief for the resit as for the first opportunity?**

Yes.

**8. Do learners have to create completely new work for the resit?**

No. Learners can add to existing work for the resit but all work for the learning outcome must be submitted.

**9. What needs to be submitted for the resit?**

- All work for the learning outcome that is being resat must be provided, even if some of it was submitted in the first window. Work submitted in the previous window will not be referred to by the assessor.
- A new Controlled Assessment Log for the resit
- A new signed Learner Declaration form for the resit.

**10. Where is the work submitted?**

Against the learner registration on <https://cloud.rslawards.com> in the same way as the first submission.

**11. The students didn't use the Controlled External Assessment window. Can they use the resit window as their first opportunity?**

No. The learner must have attempted the Controlled External Assessment in the published window in order to be eligible for a resit. If they have missed the window for this academic year, they will need to sit the Controlled External Assessment in the following academic year.

**12. What are the deadlines?**

Please refer to our Key Dates Calendar here -

<https://www.rslawards.com/vocational/vocational-qualifications-dates-fees/>

**13. When are the results published?**

Please refer to the Key Dates Calendar.

**14. What happens if a learner resits but still achieves an unclassified grade?**

The grade for that unit will remain unclassified. This means that the overall qualification for that learner will remain as unclassified. There will be no further opportunity to resit. If you feel there are grounds for appeal, please refer to the RSL Appeals Policy Vocational Qualifications policy on our website.

**15. What about Special considerations and Reasonable Adjustments?**

Special considerations will need to be applied for as per the RSL Special Considerations policy. The policy and the form can be found on our website here -

<https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>

Centres are required to provide reasonable adjustments in accordance with their policy to learners as required. RSL do not award Reasonable Adjustments for Vocational Qualifications. Your centre should use the JCQ regulations and assign any adjustments the learner is entitled to for the External Assessment component. You will then submit the supporting evidence (diagnosis) when you upload the learners work and it will be reflected in the External Assessment logs too (e.g. 25% time extension).

**16. What is the charge for the resit and how do I pay?**

Level 1 and 2 - £15 per learner\*

Level 3 - £30 per learner\*

*\*Prices correct as of academic year 2018-19.*

Centres will be invoiced for each learner resitting and results will be withheld until after payment is received by RSL.

**17. The learners have sat the Controlled External Assessment this year but do not want to resit this academic year. Can they resit next year?**

Only if they will have left the centre. Learners must resit the Controlled External Assessment within the academic year in which they initially attempted it. They can resit outside the programme time if they have left the centre and the centre are able to facilitate this. The learner will need to be re-registered and the full qualification fee paid.

**18. I want to appeal a learner's grade and also apply for a resit. Can I do this?**

No. An appeal will not be considered if a learner has applied for a resit opportunity. Please refer to our RSL Appeals Policy Vocational Qualifications for more information -

<https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>



### Appendix 3: Adding a Tutor to the RSL Administration Site at <https://cloud.rslawards.com>







The Quality Representative or a Centre Administrator can add a tutor for their centre by following the below steps:

- 1) Sign in at <https://cloud.rslawards.com>
- 2) Under the 'Vocational' button, select 'Vocational Tools'
- 3) Select '[Staff](#)' at the bottom of the page
- 4) Select 'View Staff'
- 5) Select '[Add New Tutor](#)' and follow the instructions.

This will add tutors rather than centre administrators but the tutor access should give all the permissions that staff need. They won't be able to add additional staff with a tutor account, this can only be done by the Quality Representative or a Centre administrator. If you would like them to have Centre Administrator access, please ask the staff member to go to <https://cloud.rslawards.com/create-account> and create an account and then email this to [vocational@rslawards.com](mailto:vocational@rslawards.com) and we can link them to your centre on the system.

### Appendix 4: How to upload against a learner registration

- Sign in to the <https://cloud.rslawards.com> site.
- From the drop down in the top right-hand corner, select '[External Assessments](#).'
- In the 'Search' page, make sure the current assessment year is selected and select 'Search.' This will bring up all learners registered on external assessment for this year.
- If you wish, you can filter by unit by selecting the 'Unit' drop down before pressing 'Search.'
- Select 'Upload' next to the learner registration. This will take you through to the learner registration where you will be able to upload files.
- **Once you have added the files, select 'Upload unit files.'**
- You will see a 'Success' page.
- When files have been successfully uploaded, the 'Status' column in the learner registration will change to 'File(s) uploaded.'
- This also brings up all other learners registered on the same unit so that you can move on to the next learner and repeat the above steps.

Assessment Year	Grade	Status	Options
2018/19	Pending	No File(s) Uploaded	View  Upload 
2018/19	Pending	No File(s) Uploaded	View  Upload 
2018/19	Pending	No File(s) Uploaded	View  Upload 

The grade will say 'Pending' until the release date published in the Key Dates calendar.