T-LEVELS | Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education

T Level Technical Qualification in Digital Business Services

Employer set project (ESP)

Core skills

Digital Business

Provider guide

SAM

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About this document

Document security

Please do not distribute this document to students; this is for provider and tutor use only. All tutors must be familiar with the information in this document. This document should be kept secure at all times.

This document should be read along with the regulations for the conduct of external assessment policy. Assessment conditions and resources are defined in the qualification specific instructions for delivery (QSID). These documents can be found on the NCFE website under policies and documents.

About the employer set project

The purpose of the employer set project is to ensure that students are provided with the opportunity to apply core knowledge and skills to develop a substantial piece of work in response to an employer set brief. The brief and tasks are contextualised around an occupational area and chosen by the student ahead of the assessment window.

To achieve the assessment objectives and meet the brief, you must demonstrate the following core skills (CS):

CS1: Work with stakeholders to clarify and consider options to meet requirements

CS2: Research and investigate relevant sources and data to meet requirements

CS3: Apply a valid approach to solving data problems, identifying, and resolving issues whilst recording progress and solutions to meet requirements

CS4: Ensure that actions identify and mitigate risk to security

CS5: Communicate information clearly to technical and non-technical stakeholders

CS6: Reflect and evaluate their own performance and understand the need for continuous learning and development

The knowledge requirements will be taken from the core knowledge relevant to the brief. The briefs will change for each assessment window.

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Administering the external assessment

The pre-release task can be shared with students from at least 3 weeks before the first supervised assessment session. Time is not restricted for students to complete the pre-release task; however, it should be completed and submitted at least 1 week before the start of the assessment window.

The maximum time allowed for the external assessment is 15 hours (supervised conditions over a period of 2 weeks). The individual timings for each task are detailed later in the document. The table below shows when providers may run each task and at which stage of the assessment window each task should be completed by:

Task	Week 1	Week 2
1	Monday to Thursday	–
2(a)	Monday to Thursday	–
2(b)	NCFE fixed date: Friday	–
3	–	Monday to Wednesday
4	–	Thursday to Friday

NCFE sets the start date and the submission date of the assessment window for the external assessment task. External assessment material should not be given to students until the first supervised assessment session.

The assessment window will consist of provider-arranged supervised sessions of external assessment. Sessions can be undertaken in the normal classroom environment, so long as each student has access to a computer system. Providers can decide how to arrange supervised sessions. Providers must submit students' completed assessment work by the published submission date.

When preparing to start a supervised session, time taken to print students' work is not included as part of the permitted hours for the external assessment task. In addition to this, time taken to collate, and upload students' work is also not included as part of the permitted hours for the external assessment time.

At any time, NCFE may request the timetable that providers have set for the supervised sessions.

The permitted time must not be increased, unless a reasonable adjustment has been agreed for a student in accordance with the reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy, which can be found on the NCFE website.

The permitted time must not be decreased. Students must be given the opportunity to complete the full amount of time for the external assessment task. Providers must take this into account when timetabling the session.

In the event the student misses a supervised session, the following procedure must be followed:

- if a student misses task 1 or 2(a), then the provider can rearrange a new session within the first assessment window week. However, task 2(a) must be completed before task 2(b), otherwise providers will have to follow the NCFE reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy, which can be found on the NCFE website
- if a student misses task 2(b), providers must follow the NCFE reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy, which can be found on the NCFE website

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- if a student misses tasks 3 or 4, then the provider can rearrange a new session within the second assessment window week

Each student is allowed up to a maximum of 15 minutes rest break during the tasks that have 3 or more hours allocated and breaks must be managed by the provider. These breaks must be in a supervised, controlled room and monitored by the provider.

Marking the external assessment task

The external assessment tasks are set and marked by NCFE. This means that providers must not assess, internally quality assure, or provide any feedback to the student about their performance in the external assessment task. The only exception to this is in relation to the pre-release task, which providers must check to ensure that the stipulated conditions have been met. This is detailed later in this document.

In order to achieve a grade for the core component, the student must attempt both of the external examinations and the employer set project. The combined grades from these assessments will be aggregated to form the overall core component grade (A* to E and U). If students do not attempt one of the assessments or fail to reach the minimum standard across all assessments, they will receive a U grade until the student resits the relevant components.

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Instructions for tutors

Assessment conditions

Students must complete the employer set project independently and under supervised conditions, as per the specific guidance for each task below.

Students are required to sign an external assessment cover sheet (EACS) - declaration of authenticity form to confirm that the work is their own. A single form is sufficient for the whole project including the pre-release task. The forms can be found on the NCFE website. This is to ensure authenticity and to prevent potential malpractice and maladministration. Students must be made aware of the importance of this declaration and the impact this could have on their overall grade if the evidence was found not to be the student's own work.

Tutors must retain students' research materials and all materials and/or evidence produced by students within the supervised assessment. At the end of each supervised session, the tutor must collect all evidence and any other materials, including students' research materials, before students leave the room. This is to ensure that no student takes any external assessment material or assessment evidence out of the room. This also includes sufficient monitoring and checks to ensure that students have not made materials available to themselves or anyone else electronically via the intranet or internet.

External assessment materials should be securely stored between supervised sessions. Students must not have access to this area between the supervised sessions, including electronic files.

Work such as formative assessment and/or work done with sample assessment materials must not be used again as part of the external assessment task submission to NCFE.

Appendices should not be included and will not be marked unless specifically required from the task instructions.

Students are not allowed access to any online cloud storage or email and chat services during the assessment, this should be monitored by the providers.

The pre-release task

To support the completion of the tasks within the employer set project, students are required to engage in research based activity that is focussed around finding and selecting relevant information, from a range of sources, to use as references to support their knowledge and understanding, or to justify their responses.

The information students select should be refined and focussed around the details within the pre-release task, ahead of the supervised scheduled assessment. The pre-release task can be shared with students and should be shared at least 3 weeks before the **first** supervised assessment session, which should **only** be scheduled to take place within the relevant assessment window. It is recommended that tutors allow themselves 1 week to check and verify that the materials are produced in line with the following requirements:

- all information should be contained within 4 pages (sides), excluding references
- all information should be completed electronically using black font, Arial size 12pt, and within standard border sizes unless otherwise specified
- students must clearly show where sources have been used to support their own ideas and opinions
- students must clearly reference all sources used to support their own ideas and opinions
- any quotations from websites must be referenced

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Where students have not met these conditions, students can be asked to amend their materials so that they do meet the conditions before the delivery of the first supervised assessment session.

Students **must** submit their research materials to their tutor before the cohort's first supervised session, at least 1 week before the first supervised assessment session. Students should **not** have access to the tasks until the research materials have been approved. The purpose of these checks is to ensure that the assessment maintains its validity and helps to prevent malpractice.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism may result in the external assessment task being awarded a U grade.

For further guidance, refer to the student handbook – plagiarism guidance and maladministration and malpractice guidance located on the NCFE website.

Resources

Students must have access to the appropriate resources required to complete the employer set project. These include the following:

- research materials which have been approved by the tutor
- software applications to present text, images, charts, and graphs such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, Google Docs, Google Drawings
- software applications to process data and create charts and graphs, such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets
- access to the internet (though this should be limited to ensure that access to online cloud storage services and/or online chat clients are not accessible) for tasks 1, 2(b), and 3
- privacy mode should be disabled, and policies applied to prevent deletion of browsing history
- free online data resources such as diagrams.net (www.diagrams.net), or Canva (https://www.canva.com/en_gb), are permitted for tasks 1 and 3

This list is not exhaustive, and you need to refer to the qualification specification for subject-specific details.

Accessibility and fairness

To promote accessibility and fairness for all students and to ensure diversity and equality, we expect providers to be aware of, and meet the requirements of relevant NCFE policies and government legislation. You must ensure that:

- all of your processes concerned with assessment are carried out in a fair and objective manner
- you continue to adhere to current equal opportunities legislation
- you continue to operate an effective diversity and equality policy, with which students are familiar and which applies to all students using our products and services

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Assessment and task specific instructions

For each assessment window, there will be 1 version of the employer set project available for booking; this version is contextualised against the occupational specialisms relevant to the pathway. The brief will be set by employers in conjunction with NCFE and will be different for each assessment window. The briefs are designed to ensure a motivating starting point for students and will be based on, for example, a real world problem. For the Digital Business Services there is only 1 occupational specialism which students will take forward for their employer set project: Data Technician.

The provider must book students onto the appropriate version of the employer set project by the deadline for that specific assessment series as indicated on the Key Dates Schedule which can be found on the relevant qualification page on the NCFE website.

Bookings will be made on the NCFE Portal, and guidance can be found in the portal handbook which can be accessed within the system.

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Delivery guidance

Each task has a set of specific guidance, controls, and resource requirements in order to allow students to complete the employer set project. These are explained for each task in more detail later in this document; the table below shows the tasks which allow internet access. Providers must ensure that students observe the task specific controls around internet use as stated in the task specific guidance.

Task	Internet access
1	Yes, with set controls
2(a)	No
2(b)	Yes, with set controls
3	Yes, with set controls
4	No

Pre-release task

Students to be issued with the pre-release task only.

This task can be completed outside of controlled conditions, for example, in the student's own home.

Students will need access to the internet and a word processing application or other suitable software to record their research notes.

On completion of the task, students are to submit their notes to be checked against pre-set conditions as stated on page 12 of this document. Research should be saved in a .pdf format and submitted to the tutor who will keep the document secure until the first assessment session.

Task 1

Students to be issued with their pre-release research at the start of this task for reference only.

Students will be provided with an email template for this task.

Students will need access to a word processing application or other suitable software.

On completion of the task, the student's Gantt chart and email are to be saved in a .pdf format before being submitted to a secure area. This task will be marked by NCFE; however, students will be able to refer to this for future tasks, and providers should ensure that they have a copy of the student's work to issue them for reference/completion of subsequent tasks.

Controls

Internet access is available for this task to allow students to use online resources to help them create their Gantt chart. Students are not permitted to use the internet for any other purpose, such as research. A copy of their

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internet browsing history must be submitted as part of their evidence for this task. Providers must ensure that privacy mode is disabled, and policies applied prevent deletion of browsing history.

Each student is allowed up to a maximum of 15 minutes rest break during the tasks that have 3 or more hours allocated and breaks must be managed by the provider. These breaks must be in a supervised, controlled room and monitored by the provider.

Task 2(a)

Students to be issued with their pre-release research at the start of this task for reference only.

Students will need access to a word processing application or other suitable software.

Controls

Access to the internet or previous coursework/teaching materials is not permitted.

Task 2(b)

Task 2(b) will have a fixed date set by NCFE within the assessment window.

Students are to be issued with their pre-release research at the start of this task for reference only.

A list of possible resources, detailed earlier in this document, offer a good starting point for the resources that students may use in this task. However, it is not an exhaustive list and there may be other suitable resources available.

Students will need access to a word processing application and spreadsheet or other suitable software.

Data sets to be issued to students to enable them to progress through the remainder of the project.

Data sets to be issued for this task are:

- ecom_data_set_v1.0
- KJR Garages_aggregate data_v1.0
- KJR Garages_sample exports_v1.0
- ONS Internet Sales Data 2022 v1.0

Controls

Internet access is available for this task to allow students to use online resources to help them create their entity relationship diagram (ERD). Students are not permitted to use the internet for any other purpose, such as research. A copy of their internet browsing history must be submitted as part of their evidence for this task. Providers must ensure that privacy mode is disabled, and policies applied prevent deletion of browsing history.

Each student is allowed up to a maximum of 15 minutes rest break during the tasks that have 3 or more hours allocated, and breaks must be managed by the provider. These breaks must be in a supervised, controlled room and monitored by the provider.

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Task 3

Students will be provided with their pre-release research for reference only.

Students will also be given a copy of the 2 data sets (created as part of task 2(b)) and all other data sets, to use as required. It is acceptable to provide students with versions of the data sets that are editable, in order to allow them to visualise the parts of the data they see as most appropriate. However, the version submitted at the end of task 2(b) will be the one used for marking of that assessment.

Students will need access to a word processing and spreadsheet application or other suitable software.

Controls

Internet access is available for this task to allow students to use online resources to create their data visualisations and digital slides, if needed. Students are not permitted to use the internet for any other purpose, such as research. A copy of their internet browsing history must be submitted as part of their evidence for this task. Providers must ensure that privacy mode is disabled, and policies applied prevent deletion of browsing history.

Task 4

Students to be issued with all previously completed tasks at the start of this task for reference only.

Students will be provided with an electronic template for the reflective evaluation.

Students will need access to a word processing application or other suitable software.

Controls

Access to the internet or previous coursework/teaching materials is not permitted.

Timings

The timings below have been devised to support student and provider planning.

Pre-release research task = unlimited time, but can only be shared with students from 1 April 2022, and at least 3 weeks before the first supervised session and must be submitted at least 1 week prior to the first supervised assessment session.

Task 1 = 3 hours

Task 2(a) = 2 hours

Task 2(b) = 4 hours

Task 3 = 4 hours

Task 4 = 2 hours

Total = 15 hours

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Instructions for completing and submitting the external assessment tasks

The external assessment tasks must be completed and uploaded at the end of each session.

Tutors are encouraged to ensure that students follow the filename conventions specified in the external assessment tasks for each individual document, which is: Surname_Initial_student number_evidence reference, for example: Smith_J_123456789_Task1.

Where evidence reference is shown, this should be replaced with the task number for which the work reflects. All files for each task must be saved in a .pdf format. The files for each task, per student, should be placed within a single folder before being zipped and submitted at the end of each supervised task. If there is only 1 file required for the task, then it does not need to be zipped and may be uploaded in a .pdf format.

Students must respond to each task individually and follow the document structure when submitting their evidence, as per the evidence requirements section within each task. They must not combine responses for separate tasks.

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Guidance for students

Relevant parts of this guidance for students arealso available in the employer set project assessment briefs for each task.

Student instructions

- read the project brief carefully before starting your work
- you must work independently and make your own decisions as to how to approach the tasks within the employer set project
- you are permitted to bring in and use your own research, carried out in response to the pre-release task, to the supervised sessions but these must be checked for suitability by your tutor. Your research must:
    - be contained within 4 pages (sides), excluding references
    - should be completed electronically using black font, Arial size 12pt, and within standard border sizes unless otherwise specified
    - clearly show where sources have been used to support your own ideas and opinions
    - reference any quotations from websites
- you must clearly name and date all of the work that you produce during each supervised session
- you must submit all of your work to a secure area provided by your tutor at the end of each supervised session following the instructions for each task
- you must not work on the assessment in between supervised sessions
- some tasks will permit the use of the internet for specific reasons – this information will be provided, where relevant, in the additional guidance section for each task

Student information

- this employer set project will assess your knowledge, understanding and skills from across the core content of the qualification
- tasks 1 and 3 will also assess your English skills and task 3 will assess your digital skills
- in order to achieve a grade for the core component, you must attempt both of the external examinations and the employer set project
- the combined marks from these assessments will be aggregated to form the overall core component grade (A* to E and U), if you do not attempt one of the assessments, or fail to reach the minimum standard across all assessments, you will receive a U grade
- the maximum time you will have to complete all tasks for this employer set project is 15 hours. Your tutor will explain how this time is broken down per task and will confirm with you if individual tasks need to be completed across multiple sessions
- at the end of each supervised session, your tutor will collect all employer set project assessment materials before you leave the room

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- you must not take any assessment material outside of the room, for example, via a physical memory device
- you must not upload any work produced to any platform that will allow you to access materials outside of the supervised sessions (including email)
- you can fail to achieve marks if you do not fully meet the requirements of the task, or equally if you are not able to efficiently meet the requirements of the task

Plagiarism

Plagiarism may result in the external assessment task being awarded a U grade.

For further guidance, refer to your student handbook.

Presentation of work

- all of your work should be completed electronically using black font, Arial size 12pt, and within standard border sizes unless otherwise specified
- all of your work should be clearly labelled with the relevant task number and your student details and be legible, for example, front page and headers
- electronic files should be named using the following format: Surname_Initial_student number_evidence reference, for example: Smith_J_123456789_Task1 for identification purposes – where evidence reference is shown, this should be replaced with the task number for which the work reflects and saved in a .pdf format
- all pages of your work should be numbered in the format ‘page X of Y,’ where X is the page number and Y is the total number of pages
- you must complete and sign the external assessment cover sheet (EACS) – declaration of authenticity form and include it at the front of your assessment task evidence
- you must submit your evidence to the secure area at the end of each session

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Document information

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