Gold INGOT Unit 3 : Using Collaborative Technologies (ITQ UCT)

Relevant LINKS

BACK TO ITQ UNITS **[1]**

Handbook home page **[2]**

Overview

The candidate will be able to select and use a varied range of IT tools and techniques. They will use these to find and review information and send and receive messages independently, responding to work activities that are at times non-routine or unfamiliar. Any aspect that is unfamiliar will require support and advice from others.

A work activity will typically be 'non-routine or unfamiliar' because: the task or context is likely to require some analysis, clarification or research to separate the components and to identify what factors need to be considered before an approach can be planned. For example, time available, audience needs, accessibility of source, types of content and meaning. The candidate will take some responsibility for developing the input or output of information and the techniques required will involve a number of steps and at times be non-routine or unfamiliar.

Examples of context – Working on a public web page or wiki to plan, execute and evaluate the provision of information for a practical purpose.

Activities supporting the assessment of this award **[3]**

Example of work at this level **[4]**

Assessor's guide to interpreting the criteria

General Information

QCF general description for Level 2 qualifications

- Achievement at QCF level 2 (EQF Level 3) reflects the ability to select and use relevant knowledge, ideas, skills and procedures to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. It includes taking responsibility for completing tasks and procedures and exercising autonomy and judgement subject to overall direction or guidance.
- Use understanding of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. Interpret relevant information and ideas. Be aware of the types of information that are relevant to the area of study or work.
- Complete well-defined, generally routine tasks and address straightforward problems. Select and use relevant skills and procedures. Identify, gather and use relevant information to inform actions. Identify how effective actions have been.
- Take responsibility for completing tasks and procedures subject to direction or guidance as needed.

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Requirements

- Standards must be confirmed by a trained Gold Level Assessor or higher
- Assessors must at a minimum record assessment judgements as entries in the on-line mark book on the INGOTs.org certification site.
- Routine evidence of work used for judging assessment outcomes in the candidates' records of their day to day work will be available from their e-portfolios and on-line work. Assessors should ensure that relevant web pages are available to their Account Manager on request by supply of the URL.
- When the candidate provides evidence of matching all the criteria to the specification subject to the guidance below, the assessor can request the award using the link on the certification site. The Account Manager will request a random sample of evidence from candidates' work that verifies the assessor's judgement.
- When the Account Manager is satisfied that the evidence is sufficient to safely make an award, the candidate's success will be confirmed and the unit certificate will be printable from the web site.
- This unit should take an average level 2 learner 40 hours of work to complete.

Assessment Method

Assessors can score each of the criteria N, L, S or H. N indicates no evidence. L indicates some capability but some help still required. S indicates that the candidate can match the criterion to its required specification. H indicates performance that goes beyond the expected in at least some aspects. Candidates are required to achieve at least a S on all the criteria to achieve the full award.

Expansion of the assessment criteria

1. The candidate will stay safe and secure when using collaborative technology

1.1 I can take appropriate steps to avoid risks when working with collaborative technologies including complying with guidelines

Candidates should demonstrate practically that they avoid common risks.

Evidence: Observation by assessors.

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should take routine precautions such as staying anonymous on-line, keeping passwords secure, follow acceptable use policies. They should achieve working outcomes through following accepted guidelines for health and safety. They should respect copyright. General behaviour and actions should show due regard for risk, including cooperative behaviour and following instructions.

1.2 I can explain what risks there may be in using collaborative technologies and how to

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keep them to a minimum

Candidates should document a simple risk assessment and make it available from a URL. The risk assessment should include explanation of identified risks.
Evidence: Simple documented risk assessment in a web page.

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should understand the risks of disclosing personal information and explain routines for reducing risk and avoiding danger. They should be aware that people do deliberately misleading things and that with a billion people connected by the internet some of them are going to be dangerous. Risks include inappropriate disclosure of personal information, misuse of images, inappropriate language, disrespect of confidentiality, power cuts, data loss. At level two there should be an ability to explain a range of risks coherently and some associate strategies to reduce risk.

1.3 I can use appropriate methods to promote trust when working collaboratively

Candidates should demonstrate that they are trustworthy through responsible behaviour and taking a balanced role in collaborative activities.
Evidence: Observations by assessors. Content of documentation and team evaluations.

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should demonstrate a responsible attitude to those with whom they are working. They should provide accurate and factual information including evidence such as reliable secondary sources. They should make it clear when a view is their opinion and acknowledge that there could be different views no matter how strongly they believe something. They should be even-tempered and sensitive to the perceptions of other people even if they are not physically present. They should demonstrate a willingness to be supportive and take a fair share of the work involved in collaborative tasks. They should have opportunities for leadership as well as being a team member.

1.4 I can carry out appropriate checks on others' online identities and different types of information

Candidates should be able to perform searches to check identities using cross-referencing. With well-known people there will probably be several references that can be matched. With less well-known people it could be more difficult.
Evidence: Observations by assessors. Content of documentation reporting findings.

Additional information and guidance
There should be a constant awareness that multiple internet ids and aliases are easy to create. Similarly information can appear to be from an authoritative source but could be deliberately misleading. It is not unusual for the press to sensationalise and mislead to sell more newspapers and the web provides even greater scope. Candidates should have considered some specific web sites that range from good quality information to misleading and inaccurate information. (Health sites http://www.channel4.com/entertainment/tv/microsites/Y/yawye/ [5] provide a good source. Compare what is at the first link with the information provided here http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2007/feb/12/advertising.food [6].
The difference between Level 2 (Gold) and Level 1 (Silver) is that for Level 2 candidates should show that they can cross-reference sources in their searches and routinely provide references.

1.5 I can identify and respond to inappropriate content and behaviour

Candidates should report inappropriate content and behaviour to their assessor. They should not engage in any dialogue or information exchange that contravenes the local acceptable use policies.
Evidence: Observations by assessors. Content of documentation such as Blogs and on-line reports.

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should be familiar with general "netiquette" and understand the practicalities of any acceptable use policy. They should not send out e-mail or other communications without some careful thought. Would they be happy to provide the content to that person in the flesh observed by

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their closest relatives? They should know how to block pop-ups in a web browser, unwanted e-mail and recognise and ignore potential malware. In significant cases they should contact someone in authority with a high level of IT experience who they can trust to make the right decision. All attempts to arrange physical meetings with young people on the strength of an internet contact should be treated as important enough to inform a responsible knowledgeable adult. All attempts to break into networks or find out and use other people's passwords should be treated as serious inappropriate behaviour.

2. The candidate will set up and access IT tools and devices for collaborative work

2.1 I can describe the purposes for using collaborative technologies

Candidates should be able to describe the purposes of using collaborative technologies. This should include naming typical applications and describing why they are useful with particular emphasis on the collaborative function.

Evidence: Content of web pages

Additional information and guidance

Candidates will undertake a project or projects supported by collaborative technologies. As long as their planning identifies the purpose of the project and why using collaborative technologies will support the outcome, this will be sufficient.

2.2 I can describe what outcomes are needed from collaborative working and whether or not archiving is required

Candidates should demonstrate that they have a clear purpose in using collaborative technologies through their general work and should have opportunities to evaluate their work and describe the outcomes of working with others saying what their role was and how it contributed to the outcome. Archiving includes the long term storage of any outcomes from the project.

Evidence: Content of plans for collaborative projects.

Additional information and guidance

Their planning and documented discussions should describe outcomes such as learning from other people, sharing information, developing resources, taking part in discussions and debates. They should show they appreciate the need for archiving for example to back up important work or make a record of minutes of meetings or similar outcomes, to provide it off-line or to keep a historical record. If they use the INGOT learner site, pages are automatically stored and kept as a record every time a change is made and the whole site is backed up several times a day. Candidates should understand that if they use this site archiving is done automatically. If they use other sites they need to check and understand the position as far as archiving is concerned.

2.3 I can describe the roles, IT tools and facilities needed for collaborative tasks and communication media

Candidates should provide evidence that they can describe roles such as team leader, team member, and the broad technologies needed for collaboration e.g. a network, shared web pages and tools that can operate on data in standard formats.
Evidence: Observations by assessors. Content of documentation and team evaluations.

Additional information and guidance

They should appreciate the need to create quality solutions that show they have considered how the information should be interpreted and presented in forms that suit audience, purpose and content. They should describe how they communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and securely.

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2.4 I can describe the features, benefits and limitations of different collaborative technology tools and devices

They should be able to describe specific hardware and software technologies that can support collaborative work, e.g. Mobile computing devices, headset, content management software, forum, Voice over IP and benefits and limitations of these

Evidence: Content of web page documentation describing plans

Additional information and guidance

Analysis under the headings strengths and weaknesses is recommended to reinforce this as standard practice

2.5 I can describe the compatibility issues in different combinations of collaborative tools and devices

Candidates should describe potential issues of compatibility between the tools they intend to use for collaborative work. They should research compatibility issues for a range of commonly used tools and report their findings in their web pages.
Evidence: From web pages.

Additional information and guidance

The candidate should appreciate the importance of open standards in collaborative tools on a global scale. While it is possible to achieve compatibility through highly integrated proprietary standards from a single source or cartel of vendors it is very risky to do so. The bigger the data systems those interests control the greater their power in relation to the user. For this reason the trend is to migrate to open standards and the success of the internet is largely attributable to the fact that its core technologies are based on open standards. W3C, The World Wide Web Consortium, founded and headed by Sir Tim Berners-Lee is the main international standards organization for the internet.

If collaborative tools adopt open standards there are likely to be fewer compatibility problems and it doesn't force everyone to buy technologies from a single supplier who owns a particular standard. A good example of a proprietary standard that for a long time reduced the choice of Word Processors to just MS Word is .doc. It is now being replaced with XML based standards that are open for everyone to use. This makes it more likely that there will be more choice of Word Processors in the future with better integration of Word Processing documents with the internet and other open technologies.

File formats and data structures are one key aspect of compatibility, another is protocols. Protocols are rules used by computers to communicate with each other across networks. They are standards that control or enable the connection, communication, and transfer of data. If a protocol is secret and owned by one supplier it would enable that supplier to monopolise all the computer technologies using the protocol. A good example of an open standard protocol is HTTP seen at the beginning of each web address. HyperText Transfer Protocol defines how messages are formatted and transmitted on the internet, and what actions web servers and browsers should take in response to various commands. For example, when you enter a URL web address in your browser, this actually sends an HTTP command to the web server directing it to fetch and transmit the requested web page. Imagine if you had to pay a royalty to a single company every time you used HTTP or if the protocol was secret so that only one company could make web servers and web browsers. Indeed for a time there was very little web browser development because Internet Explorer had almost 100% of the market. Now with competition from Firefox, Safari and Google Chrome, Internet Explorer is being much more rapidly developed and improved. This is why it is important for web pages to conform to W3C standards rather than the way any particular browser behaves. Firefox is a good reference standard because it adheres strictly to the standards. If a proprietary browser has a big market share it can break the standards such that web sites also have to break the standard for their pages to be properly rendered and then competitor browsers are rendered useless. Fortunately that danger now seems to have passed and there is increasing pressure for all browsers to properly support the W3C standards that are independent of particular commercial interests.

In summary, the candidate should show evidence of researching information about compatibility

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between collaborative tools and report their findings in web pages (Blogs or e-portfolios). This will require processing large quantities of data using search engines and presenting web page skills to present their learning effectively.

2.6 I can select an appropriate combination of IT tools and devices to carry out collaborative tasks

Candidate should be able to choose appropriately from a range of available tools.

Evidence: From web pages, blogs, e-portfolios

Additional information and guidance

The candidate's work should focus on using the internet as a collaborative medium using tools such as content management systems, forums, blogs, text editor and graphics editor to produce useful information systems for other people through communication and exchange of information that is safe responsible and secure. Candidate should be able to choose appropriately from a range of available tools.

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Additional information and guidance

The candidate's work should focus on using the internet as a collaborative medium using tools such as content management systems, forums, blogs, text editor and graphics editor to produce useful information systems for other people through communication and exchange of information that is safe responsible and secure.

2.7 I can connect and configure the combination of IT tools and devices needed for a collaborative task

The candidate should show that they can set up and configure tools to meet their own and other people's needs to support their projects and solve problems.

Evidence: Observations by assessors. Content of documentation

Additional information and guidance

For example, they might set up a buddy list in a social networking site in order to find friends quickly. They might set up a shared web page so that their group can contribute to its content in collaboration with people on other sites. They might set up a new discussion thread in a forum so that people can contribute from multiple sites. They might set up Skype on a computer to contact other people and discuss their project.

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3. The candidate will prepare collaborative technologies for use

3.1 I can describe what access rights and issues others may have in using collaborative technologies

The candidate should be able to describe why different rights are needed for different users in a collaborative community.

Evidence: Descriptions in plans preparing their projects.

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Additional information and guidance
Inexperienced users could, for example, damage the system if given administration rights. Some people might appear trustworthy but they might damage systems wilfully if given Administrator rights. Some information could be confidential to particular groups of people. There is a trade off between convenience of free use and the need for security.

3.2 I can assess what permissions are needed for different users and content
Evidence: Descriptions in plans preparing their projects. Setting up a real account on a collaborative site

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should consider what information a system might require and what information might be mandatory when setting up a new account in a collaborative system. For example, an e-mail address in order to securely send a new password, contact phone number, a strong password, a user name or real name.

3.3 I can set up and use access rights to enable others to access information
The candidate should show that they have understood terms and conditions, registered an account with their id on a system that allows them to share information with other people and enables others to share their information.

Evidence: Content of e-portfolios and web pages

Additional information and guidance
They should appreciate issues such as what personal information they make available. It is strongly advised that they do not make their e-mail address publicly visible (or they will get swamped with spam apart from any other dangers) and they do not give out their real name or details of physical locations and times where they could be found. Google accounts provide free facilities to try out a lot of these features. If there is a concern about Google's ownership of user information, simply don't include anything that is sensitive. Exploration with non-important information is perfectly possible.
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Evidence: Content of e-portfolios and web pages
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3.4 I can set up and use permissions to filter information

The candidate should show that they can set up a "buddy list" or similar system to make connections with friends or colleagues in order to filter the information that comes with being part of a large community.
Evidence: User accounts, assessor observation

Additional information and guidance
It is not very difficult to set up an entire collaborative web site in Drupal or similar content management software. Any candidate that can do this and show that they can set up permissions through the administrator account is operating at a level higher than Level 2.

3.5 I can adjust settings so that others can access IT tools and devices for collaborative working
The candidate should enable themselves and others to develop efficient and effective ICT-based solutions through the use of collaborative technologies.

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Evidence: Assessor observations and successful use of collaborative tools.

Additional information and guidance
They should know that a wide range of hardware can be used to access web based collaborative technologies, from "Smartphones" to desktop PCs running a range of operating system software. There is a wide choice of tools. They are then in a position to advise others on what equipment might be appropriate. For example, they can have more than one web browser available just in case one can't access something or formats some pages badly. With free and open source software and machines with masses of disc space there is no reason to restrict the tools available and readiness for future change is supported by choice and experience. Candidates should be aware that the themes and colours they choose for web pages can affect access, eg colour blind people might not be able to tell the difference between two primary colours. Default type size should be appropriate. They should show they can use CTRL+ and CTRL- to make web page text larger or smaller. In Google docs they can share a spreadsheet or other application by inviting other people to participate as observers or editors.

3.6 I can select and use different elements to control environments for collaborative technologies

Candidates should be able to choose themes and copy HTML tagged text to replicate particular effects. This technique is used regularly to add logos and links such as satellite maps and video links to web sites.
Evidence: Observations by assessors. Content of documentation and team evaluations.

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should have opportunities to copy standard HTML to provide specific effects on pages and building short JavaScript programs to make pages interactive. They should be aware of environmental factors such as lighting and positioning of hardware in terms of safe and efficient working.

3.7 I can select and join networks and data feeds to manage data to suit collaborative tasks
Candidates should be able to subscribe to relevant networks, mailing lists and forums to support collaborative working.

Evidence: Observations by assessors. Contributions to forums, mailing lists or or similar networks.

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should network with others in order to systematically analyse the information requirements to solve a problem. They should work collaboratively to manage data, exploring it and developing it to produce a solution. The solution could be presented through a shared web page. This can be a public page on the INGOT learning site, a wiki page or a page on any community web site suitable for collaborative working. Candidates should demonstrate that they have considered RSS (Really Simple Syndication) for their product and summarised any decision to use or not use RSS on the basis of some understanding of its principles.

4. Candidates will contribute to tasks using collaborative technologies

4.1 I can describe rules of engagement for using collaborative technologies
The candidate should provide a description of the conditions and any constraints on working with collaborative technologies.

Evidence: Descriptions in web pages and planning documentation.

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should demonstrate an appreciation for taking different roles in a team approach using collaborative technologies and agreeing the roles at the start of a task. They should understand this in the context of more general netiquette and considerations of safety. If working with an

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international project, one rule might be that all communication is in English. The acceptable use policy will be relevant here.

4.2 I Enable others to contribute responsibly to collaborative tasks

Candidates should demonstrate the capacity to work with others and to enable them to contribute effectively.
Evidence: Observations by assessors and success of collaborative tasks where the candidate is involved.

Additional information and guidance
Candidates should start by working in an identified team and providing a good example to others in terms of follow the rules of netiquette, respecting others contributions, avoiding over-domination or under-participation. When acting as a team leader they should show the capacity to bring others in and ensure that there are balanced contributions. They should accept criticism graciously and work on improving weaknesses. When acting as a team member they should support the leader and help maintain the effectiveness of the working group including reviewing, modifying, and evaluating work as it progresses. Evidence from assessor observations and the success of tasks requiring a team approach using collaborative technologies.

4.3 I can present relevant and valuable information
Candidates should be able to identify specific and individual contributions that they made that were useful to the task.

Evidence: from assessor observations and content of pages.

4.4 I can moderate the use of collaborative technologies

Candidates should show initiative in reporting inappropriate content, checking posts and other material to ensure that it falls within the guidelines for acceptable use. They should be provided with the opportunity to act as moderator for their group in a significant part of a collaborative task.
Evidence: All work presented falls within the acceptable use guidelines.

4.5 I can archive the outcome of collaborative working

Candidates should appreciate that versioning control in sites such as the INGOT community site and Wikipedia save versions of web pages each time they are saved. This means that there is an automatic archive of their work and the history of its development. They should supplement any tasks and projects by describing the development process in blog pages or an e-portfolio.
Evidence: From web pages, blogs, e-portfolios

4.6 I can assess when there is a problem with collaborative technologies and when to get expert help

Candidates should take a systematic approach to solving problems with the technology. Routine checks should include power connected, reboot of computer if hung, are other machines on the network working as normal? For software problems they should be encouraged to search appropriate internet groups where problems are likely to be discussed. If they can solve most problems self-sufficiently through internet searching they are operating at higher than Level 2.
Evidence: from assessor observation, blog entries, web page descriptions.

4.7 I respond to problems with collaborative technologies

Candidates should demonstrate a willingness to use their initiative to get solutions to their technical problems working collaboratively with their peers and others and asking more experienced users.
Evidence: From assessor observation.

Moderation/verification

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The assessor should keep a record of assessment judgements made for each candidate and make notes of any significant issues for any candidate. They must be prepared to enter into dialog with their Account Manager and provide their assessment records to the Account Manager through the on-line mark book. They should be prepared to provide evidence as a basis for their judgements through reference to candidate e-portfolios and through signed witness statements associated with the criteria matching marks in the on-line markbook. Before authorizing certification, the Account Manager must be satisfied that the assessors judgements are sound.

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