

## ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

for

iTQ

03384 OCR LEVEL 1 NVQ FOR IT USERS

03385 OCR LEVEL 2 NVQ FOR IT USERS

03386 OCR LEVEL 3 NVQ FOR IT USERS

to be used in conjunction with the iTQ Centre Handbook and iTQ Candidate Resource

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# MAKE SELECTIVE USE OF IT LEVEL 1

## Unit 1A

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge.

The assessment for this unit **must take place in the workplace**; evidence must come naturally from work place tasks and activities.

In demonstrating competence in this unit you must show that you can use the skills and techniques required for **at least two** optional units. In other words, you cannot achieve this unit by producing all the evidence using just spreadsheets or just word processing, and so on.

The following table shows some examples of the quantities and content of tasks that would be acceptable as evidence for assessment. The list is by no means exhaustive and is intended as a guide only. The knowledge requirement is largely self-explanatory. Further guidance for centres should be sought initially from the External Verifier.

**Simulation is not allowed for this unit.**

	<b>Internet and intranets</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Word Processing Software</b>	<b>Spreadsheet Software</b>	<b>Database Software</b>	<b>Artwork &amp; Imaging Software</b>	<b>Website Software</b>	<b>Presentation Software</b>	<b>Specialist or Bespoke Software</b>
<b>Typical task size</b>	Download and organise information, web pages, .PDF files, etc, following a theme	Approx half page e-mail plus an attachment, plus some organisation of recipients and folders	One page of A4 text	One A4 page of data	Data array covering one A4 page	One A4 sheet including a simple image and some text	A single web page of approx A4 length with simple navigation, an image and some text	A presentation of about 5 slides to include text and a simple diagram or other image	Categorise software to nearest equivalent (WP, DB, etc) and use corresponding criteria
<b>Skills and Techniques</b>									
<b>Explaining (Use of IT)</b>	Explain the basic connection methods and browser functions	Explain basic e-mail facilities and uses	Explain why WP software particularly is used to produce simple documents	Explain why spreadsheets are used to record, analyse and present data	Explain what databases are used for and describe basic features	Explain the features of the software that make it suitable for producing simple artwork and images	Explain the features of the software that allow simple web pages to be produced in a given format	Explain the features of the presentation software that make it more suited to the task than alternatives such as word processing or image and animation software	Categorise software to nearest equivalent (WP, DB, etc) and use corresponding criteria
<b>Finding and evaluating</b>	Search for information on one subject using simple search criteria, from various sources. Choose one set of suitable information	Search for e-mails with common recipients, senders, etc, in current folders	Use test search facility to locate information on a text document of about five A4 pages	Search for cells and groups of cells containing data for a particular type	Single criteria data search	Use search facilities to locate suitable image files (clip-art, photographs, etc) for a given task. Evaluate for size, format	Use search facilities to locate suitable content for the web page (ie information, simple images, etc)	Use search facilities to locate suitable content for the presentation (ie information, simple images, etc)	Categorise software to nearest equivalent (WP, DB, etc) and use corresponding criteria



The unit requires you to **‘explain the use of IT’**. This may be done using one or more of the three tasks you will undertake for the assessment, or selecting another task if that will give you a better opportunity.

- You should clearly explain, either orally, or in a short written piece, why you used the particular software to do the job.
- In particular you should say what functions it has that enabled you to include special features in one of the completed pieces, such as high contrast or large print text, or animation to increase audience interest.

Where you are asked to **‘find and evaluate’** information:

- You should choose as a starting point, a task where you need to gather a significant amount of information for inclusion in the piece you have been asked to produce.
- It should be a situation where you will actually get more information than you need, and you then have to extract what you want. This will help you to focus on what you have to do, and will also provide good evidence for your assessor to use.
- You will then need to make a statement as to exactly what information you need for the task.
- You might then use, for example, an index, a search engine or database query, to retrieve information.
- Finally you should make a decision as to what exactly you need, before extracting it and adding it to your work.

**‘Organising’** means the process you go through to produce the final piece of work.

- You have chosen the software, gathered the information and other material, and now you can use the software to put it all together.
- You need to show that you understand who the audience is – the types of people who will use your work, what the work will contain, what form it will be in (paper, electronic, etc) and any format or ‘house style’ rules that need to be used.
- You could show that by using one of the tasks as an example during a discussion with your assessor.

**‘Reviewing’** means finding out what effect your own mistakes might have on other people’s work, so that you know how important your own work is. The best way to do this is to talk to the people you work with and find out exactly how your particular work fits in with the rest of the work. It is often like a jigsaw – each piece is small, but without it, the jigsaw would not be complete. You should ask the question ‘What if .....?’ and apply it to different problems you might come across during a job eg ‘What if I am late in completing a job?’ ‘What if this image file is too large or in the wrong format?’ and so on. The answers to these questions may not be obvious to you and so you should ask for the help and advice of other people around you. Remember that you are part of a team, each team member should know a little bit about what the others do and how their parts of the process fit together to make the finished product. You could show this knowledge during discussions with your assessor, or perhaps you could use your word processing skills to produce a short explanation.

### **Summary**

This unit is mainly to do with your ability to choose the right hardware and software and use it to do a particular job in the most effective way. There are often one or two alternatives, each with reasons why they are not the best choice. By knowing what each one does, you can make a better choice and produce work of a higher quality much quicker.

## **MAKE SELECTIVE USE OF IT LEVEL 2**

### **Unit 2A**

#### **Assessment Guidance**

You will need to produce **at least four comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge.

The assessment for this unit **must take place in the workplace**; evidence must come naturally from work place tasks and activities.

In demonstrating competence in this unit you must show that you can use the skills and techniques required for **at least two** optional units. In other words, you cannot achieve this unit by producing all the evidence using just spreadsheets or just word processing, and so on.

The following table shows some examples of the quantities and content of tasks that would be acceptable as evidence for assessment. The list is by no means exhaustive and is intended as a guide only. The knowledge requirement is largely self-explanatory. Further guidance for centres should be sought initially from the External Verifier.

**Simulation is not allowed for this unit.**

	<b>Internet and intranets</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Word Processing Software</b>	<b>Spreadsheet Software</b>	<b>Database Software</b>	<b>Artwork &amp; Imaging Software</b>	<b>Website Software</b>	<b>Presentation Software</b>	<b>Specialist or Bespoke Software</b>
<b>Typical task size</b>	Download and organise information, web pages, .PDF files, etc following a theme	One page of e-mail plus an attachment, plus some organisation of recipients and folders	Two pages of A4 text	Two A4 pages of data	Data array covering two A4 pages	Two A4 sheets including two self-produced images and explanatory text	2 linked web pages of A4 length each with related, detailed information	A presentation of about ten slides to include at least two self-produced animations	Categorise software to nearest equivalent (WP, DB, etc) and use corresponding criteria
<b>Skills and Techniques</b>									
<b>Explaining (Use of IT)</b>	Explain differences between internet and intranet	Explain different formats, suitability, secure forms, etc	Explain main features and contrast with alternatives	Explain main features and contrast with alternatives	Explain main features and contrast with alternatives	Explain the features that distinguish this software from non-specialist software (eg WP)	Explain the features of the software that allow web pages to be produced in a given format	Explain the features of the presentation software that make it more suited to the task than alternatives such as word processing or image and animation software	Categorise software to nearest equivalent (WP, DB, etc) and use corresponding criteria

	<b>Internet and intranets</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Word Processing Software</b>	<b>Spreadsheet Software</b>	<b>Database Software</b>	<b>Artwork &amp; Imaging Software</b>	<b>Website Software</b>	<b>Presentation Software</b>	<b>Specialist or Bespoke Software</b>
<b>Finding and evaluating</b>	Search for information with a given theme and with a minimum amount of detail. Evaluate the results and discard unwanted results	Search for e-mails with common themes, recipients, senders, etc in current folders and archives	Use text search facility to locate information in a large text document	Search for cells and groups of cells containing data of a particular type or within a given range	Multiple criteria data search	Use search facilities to locate suitable image files for a given task. Evaluate for quality, format, etc	Use search facilities to locate suitable content for the web pages (ie information, graphics, animations, etc)	Use search facilities to locate suitable content for the presentation (ie information, graphics, animations, etc)	Categorise software to nearest equivalent (WP, DB, etc) and use corresponding criteria
<b>Organising</b>	Select and organise bookmarked pages into themed groups. Set browser displays to cater for different needs such as high contrast or large print	Arrange e-mails into themed groups. Arrange address book entries, create groups of recipients and organise multiple e-mail accounts	Produce a letter, information sheet, etc, and present it in a non-routine format for a specific audience, (eg high contrast or large print)	Enter data and present it in suitable format	Format fields and enter data in an organised fashion	Create documents containing artwork and other images that are ordered and formatted correctly	Create web pages that function correctly, are simple to use and easy to read (eg appropriate font, contrast, etc)	Create a presentation so that the slides are in the correct order, animations function correctly, it can be controlled by the user and is easy to find	Categorise software to nearest equivalent (WP, DB, etc) and use corresponding criteria
<b>Reviewing</b>	Use individual software as a context within which to conduct reviews of use of IT. See following notes.								

The unit requires you to **'explain the use of IT'**. This may be done using one or more of the four tasks you will undertake for the assessment, or selecting another task if that will give you a better opportunity.

- You should clearly explain, either orally, or in a short written piece, why you used the particular software to do the job.
- In particular you should say what functions it has that enabled you to include special features in one of the completed pieces, such as high contrast or large print text, or animation to increase audience interest.

Where you are asked to **'find and evaluate'** information:

- You should choose as a starting point, a task where you need to gather a significant amount of information for inclusion in the piece you have been asked to produce.
- It should be a situation where you will actually get more information than you need, and you then have to extract what you want. This will help you to focus on what you have to do, and will also provide good evidence for your assessor to use.
- You will then need to make a statement as to exactly what information you need for the task.
- You might then use, for example, an index, a search engine or database query, to retrieve information.
- You should make a decision as to what exactly you need, before extracting it and adding it to your work.
- Ensure the search methods were appropriate and found the required data eg was the query in the database software appropriate and did it return the required records.

**'Organising'** means the process you go through to produce the final piece of work.

- You have chosen the software, gathered the information and other material, and now you can use the software to put it all together.
- You need to show that you have identified the audience – the types of people who will use your work, the content required, and any format or 'house style' rules that need to be observed.
- You could demonstrate that by a short oral or written statement to accompany the finished work.

**'Reviewing'** is something that many people do without realising it, and others rarely do. It means being aware of the things that you do well, and the things that you are not so good at, taking steps to improve your ability where necessary. The requirement for **'reviewing'** in this unit is in two parts:

- Firstly you should choose a task or series of tasks that you may have had difficulties with. The job may have taken too long; you may have made too many input errors, or have been unable to get a special feature to work. You should first identify and list the difficulties you have had, and then identify possible reasons for them. For this part of the unit you need to identify which of the difficulties are because you lack skill or knowledge and which are for other reasons.
- The second part is to do with your skill in understanding and acting upon advice and feedback that you may be given from time to time.
  - In this case, the assessment will focus on the way that you use the advice and feedback to improve your use of IT.
  - As an example, you may have been given the task of presenting on paper a series of data in tabular form with some explanatory text. You may have chosen to use a spreadsheet application (because that is what you are most skilful in using), when it may have been better to have used a word processor.
  - A supervisor, mentor, IT trainer or someone else in a position to advise you, might discuss the subject with you and recommend that you improve your word processing

skills, and you would then act upon that advice. This is the process that your assessor will need to be satisfied that you understand and can use to improve your skills.

## MAKE SELECTIVE USE OF IT LEVEL 3

### Unit 3A

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to assist in the planning of and carry out **at least five substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

The assessment for this unit **must take place in the workplace**; evidence must come naturally from work place tasks and activities.

In demonstrating competence in this unit you must show that you can use the skills and techniques required for **at least two** optional units. In other words, you cannot achieve this unit by producing all the evidence using just spreadsheets or just word processing, and so on.

#### Simulation is not allowed for this unit.

This unit concentrates on your ability to select and use IT to its fullest extent as a work tool, and to help others to use selected software and hardware by sharing your own skills and understanding with them. You need to be able to take a much wider view of IT and its uses, and to be aware of the ability of others to use hardware and software for particular tasks. You should have a comprehensive knowledge of the software applications you are using and be able to select the most appropriate ones for a given complex task. This unit will be done in the context of at least two of the optional units you have chosen as part of the complete qualification – your assessor will explain the requirements as necessary.

The **size** and content of each task will depend largely on the context in which it is being done. Use the relevant optional unit as a guide, but remember that if you have been credited with a unit through APA, you must use those skills in the course of this unit, but you **do not** have to do the whole of that optional unit. Nevertheless, whichever skills you use, they should be as part of a coherent task with a substantial outcome – not as a series of isolated demonstrations of skills.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

**Explain the use of IT.** At this level, you need to show that not only do you know **how to do** something and can actually do it, but also that you can look at, for instance, **how** a particular **software package is used** to do a particular type of job, and whether or not it is effective. You should be involved in some way in the planning of the **use of IT** by other people and so be able to suggest changes that would make tasks easier and/or quicker to do. You might be in charge of a small team of people using a range of IT applications and be responsible for reviewing the way that is done. You might be the 'expert user' asked by the management to help them make decisions about IT within the organisation. Whatever you do, you must be able to make some judgements about how and why particular items of IT are used.

Going on from that, the need to **review** your own part in using the IT systems in your organisation becomes much more important as you gain more responsibility. At this level it is very likely that you will be asked to share your experience and expertise with other who are less skilled. It is important that you get that right; the best way to ensure that is to review the way that you use IT yourself, and the way that you coach or help other people. Very often you need to do that with the help of someone else who is in a position to observe the process and who has the experience to advise you. This is a standard procedure in group environments where there is a need to work on tasks as a team to produce some kind of output. The work that you produce and the way that you produce it will have a strong impact on the work of others and on the results of the organisation.

The way to provide evidence for your **reviewing** is to start with the day-to-day management and leadership process that goes on at your level and to use that as a reason to gather evidence for this component. Stand back from the job from time to time and think about the way that jobs are done, how the IT systems are used by people around you. Make some notes including perhaps things that could be improved, with suggestions as to how that could be done. Actively seek out feedback from people if it doesn't normally happen. This is not something extra you are being asked to do – it's actually really good practice in any work (or training) situation, but many people don't do it as often as they should. Actual evidence could come in the form of memos, notes and reports you might have written, expert witness statements on your contributions to team meetings, training sessions, etc, or it could come from your annual appraisal report if that is appropriate. It could also come from work that you might have done to help introduce a new application or hardware into your work area – you might have done some coaching, or even some teaching.

Now we come to the more practical parts of the assessment.

When it comes to **finding and evaluating** information, you need to be aware of many of the pitfalls of using IT as the sourcing tool. You will be aware that, although there is a vast amount of information available from the Internet and from other IT based resources such as specialist databases and documents in various forms. At this level you need to have developed techniques for evaluating any information that is put in front of you and getting a pretty good idea whether or not it is genuine, valid, unbiased and reliable, and whether there is actually enough for you to use.

The source is very important – for instance, you could be seeking information on the in-service performance of something, it could be a piece of IT equipment such as a printer, scanner, etc, or it could equally be an MP3 player, a washing machine or a lawnmower. The data from the manufacturer's website is fair enough for a start, but they are hardly going to say anything bad about their product, are they? So you will need to find an independent source of reliable information, such as a consumer organisation that has tested it and similar items. Now you are getting closer to an unbiased, reliable, valid (does the test include your model?) set of data on which to base your decision. You can apply this to any information, but not everyone bothers to do it. You can satisfy this particular component by not only finding and evaluating information yourself, but by helping others to do it too. You should bear in mind that the source of information does **not** have to be the Internet, but can be any IT based resource.

Finally you need to demonstrate skill in **organising** your information (ie your work using whichever software you have chosen). You should use the full range of organising and structuring tools available to you, both within documents and in the storage systems you are using for them. So in the case of databases, that would quite obviously be demonstrated by the way that you configure fields and tables, and by the way that you structure queries and reports.

### **How can I demonstrate knowledge?**

First of all you need to show that you fully **understand the IT terms** you will come across in your job, and that you can explain them to other people. For instance, you should know what all the major components of your IT system are called (especially the ones that you use) and you should understand what their basic function is. You should also be able to explain those terms in a simplified way to people who might have difficulty in understanding a more technical explanation.

Next you need to show that you understand the principles of how to use IT to **produce information** that communicates effectively. You should show that you understand about different audiences and their needs, and that there are software tools and devices to help you structure things to suit.

Lastly - and this ties in with the skill component **explaining (use of IT)** - you should be able to discuss the options available in software and IT systems to make tasks easier and more successful. This might involve the use of wizards, pre-prepared templates, greater use of interactive forms, or the use of macros. You should use specific examples that are relevant to your own situation and the systems and software that you use.

**Summary**

At level 3, this unit focuses on the principles behind the use of IT, as well as the practical skills of actually using it to produce complex output. It requires the successful candidate to be able to pass on skills and information to others, and to take account of the effect their use of IT has on others around them. The successful candidate will need to demonstrate a measure of responsibility towards their organisation and their colleagues in using IT in a responsible and professional way, and to a high level of technical ability.

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# OPERATE A COMPUTER LEVEL 1

## Unit 1B

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit concentrates on general skills that you need to actually use a computer. You will not be expected to do anything that is technically complicated, and the unit assumes that the computer you are using has been properly installed and set up. You will be using standard software to produce the two pieces of work – the exact software will depend on your personal circumstances and the other units you are doing. The evidence that you produce will very likely come as part of work that you do for other units. Success in this unit will show that you have the basic skills needed to operate a computer, and you can then build upon them to do more varied and complex work using IT.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

There are three skills and techniques in which you should have a solid grounding at this level. Firstly, **setting up** – you need to be able to turn on the system and to log in if necessary, and to be able to change basic settings such as the time and date, monitor brightness and so on. These are not things that a support technician would normally be expected to do – you as an operator should know how to do them for yourself. You can use these limited settings to personalise the computer a little bit, and make it more enjoyable to use. You should also show that you can use the basic functions of a printer – again, you don't have to know all the features, but you should be able to print out a document on the correct type of paper to produce a professional looking result.

Next there is the skill involved in **accessing** files on a computer hard drive or local storage media. You are not, at this level, expected to go searching for files on a network, but you must show that you can find your way around your own computer storage devices – hard drive, CD and floppy drives – and access the files you need to work with. This will involve some knowledge of how file directories are put together, so that you can navigate your way around. Again, this is likely to happen at the same time as you are producing work for other units in the qualification.

Lastly you need to be able to use the basic file handling **tools and techniques** such as open, close, save as, cut, paste, copy and so on, so that you can work with files and organise your work in a neat and efficient way. All of these should be demonstrated during other work.

You will not be expected to do any installation, customisation or data back-ups.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

This unit is also about the basic knowledge you need to be able to make good use of a computer. Of course it is very useful to know about some of the different **types of computer hardware** that are used – not the complex high-tech items used in big networks, but things like scanners, CD re-writers, various printers and different kinds of connection used in ordinary PCs like the one you are using for this qualification. You should be able to discuss these things with your assessor and show that you have a good awareness of what is available.

Next you should show that you have a good knowledge of general types of software application such as word processing, spreadsheets, databases, etc. Of course you will not be expected to know everything about them, nor, necessarily, how to use them. But you should know what they are used for, what their main features are and what basic tools might be available to their users. You should also be able to choose which **tools and functions** you might choose to do simple tasks. This also includes some basic items provided as part of your operating system. The detail of these will vary quite a lot depending on which system you have, so you should discuss it with your assessor.

Last, but by no means least, comes **Health and Safety**. Whatever you do with a computer it must be done safely, so that you and those around you do not get hurt or suffer ill health because of it. You need to show your assessor that you are aware of the risks to health and safety in your own working environment and that you know how to minimise them. You should also have a good knowledge of what the law says about the use of IT in your workplace and what your employer says you should do to work safely.

### **Summary**

Success in this unit will show that you are able to operate a computer and use its basic functions safely to produce work that is useful and of a good standard. You can then go on to learn more skills and use them to progress as an IT user.

# OPERATE A COMPUTER LEVEL 2

## Unit 2B

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit concentrates on general skills needed in the course of your everyday use of IT. If you are being assessed in the workplace you may not be allowed to do some of the more technical things like connecting and setting up hardware, and your assessor may have to make arrangements for some off-the-job assessment. You won't be expected to do any installation involving drivers or operating system configuration, but you will have to show that you can connect some basic hardware together safely. Otherwise the assessment will be about your ability to use a computer safely and effectively.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

We are concerned with four skills and techniques here, the first of which is **setting up** the computer. Now this can be either a workstation connected to a network or a stand-alone computer with perhaps a printer and/or a scanner attached. You should be able to make the basic connections safely, recognising the common connectors such as USB for just about anything, RJ45 for network, Centronics for some printer, PS/2 for mouse and keyboard. A typical scenario might be that you have a stand-alone PC on your desk and you have to move across the other side of the office to another desk. There is no installation involved in the move – you simply have to disconnect it all, move it to the new desk, connect it up again and boot it up. Of course you would do some basic checks such as making sure that the mouse and keyboard work, but beyond that you would report any problems to the system support people.

Next there is the process of **accessing** files. At this level you need to do this on a network – so you should log on and access the files that you have permission to access. This can be demonstrated during everyday work tasks and should not need any special arrangements. If you are not connected to a local area network (LAN), remember that the Internet is simply one very large Wide Area Network, and there are plenty of files that can be accessed there!

The use of **storage media** means the common ones such as floppy disks, re-writable CDs and DVDs, zip drives and even other computers. The various forms of small removable USB and flash memory are also very suitable for this component. You need to show that you are aware of the capacities of these different media, can connect or insert them as appropriate, and can archive data to make best use of the space available. Again, this is all part of the day-to-day use of a computer and should not require any special arrangements.

Using **tools and techniques** should be done while using software applications for other units in the qualification. You should show that you can use most if not all of the basic ones included in the particular software you are using. These would include page set-up, print preview, print, save, save as, etc. These are the every day tools used to produce ordinary routine documents.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

Since you are using one or more computer systems to gain this qualification, you should be familiar with the main **types of hardware** that go to make up a computer, what they are called and what they actually do. You are not expected to have a deep technical knowledge, but you must know enough to be comfortable using the system. Next you should have a good knowledge of storage media (hard drives, floppy disks, writable CDs, etc), not just to satisfy the requirements of the unit, but so that you can make full and effective use of your system. Of course you will rarely have all of the standard types on your system, but you should at least know what they all are, how and when they are normally used and what their features and limitations are.

In the course of doing the other units and using the software, you will demonstrate knowledge and skill in using a range of software **tools and functions**. There will be tools that you don't use, but nevertheless need to know about. This unit requires you to show knowledge of most of the tools and functions and how to use them; you should discuss them all with your assessor.

The issue of **compatibility** between different hardware and software packages is an important one – you need not know the technical detail, but you do need to know what effects incompatibility has on the system, the symptoms and potential dangers to data. You also need to know why the hardware and software companies have joint standards to which they make their products.

When you are using a computer system, you are likely to be using the Internet and/or intranet. You should be aware of the different **data transmission speeds** that are available and to identify general combinations that give fast or slow speeds. This knowledge will help greatly at work or at home when you need to move large amounts of data between computers or different parts of the system. You should discuss the various options with your assessor.

Last, but not least, there comes **Health and Safety**. Whenever you are working with or around computers, there will be some sort of risk to yourself and/or the hardware and you will need to show you are aware of these. You will demonstrate that naturally while you are working, but you may need an additional discussion with your assessor to cover the risk management topics. This doesn't mean you have to be a health and safety expert, but you do need to show that you know the dangers and how to avoid them. All of the topics should have been covered in your workplace or training induction, so you should already be familiar with them.

### **Summary**

This unit is one that will confirm your ability to actually operate a computer and to put it to good use. You will be using a variety of software packages, but you will need to show that you have the fundamental skills and knowledge common to all successful users of IT equipment.

# OPERATE A COMPUTER LEVEL 3

## Unit 3B

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to assist in the planning of and carry out **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit concentrates on general skills needed in the course of your everyday use of IT. At this level you need to be an experienced IT user with the ability to use a wide range of software, hardware and tools in order to set up and use IT equipment to its best advantage – you need to know how to get the best out of your computer. Some of the skills involve activities that most system operators aren't allowed to do – upgrading operating systems, for instance. You will need to discuss assessment of these skills with your assessor – you may need to make special arrangements to achieve them.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

The unit at this level is quite a step up from the Level 2 in that it introduces additional requirements for **Installing** items of hardware and operating system upgrades, and also for customising software. This means that you will need to have more experience and responsibility within your current or potential job role.

**Setting up**, in this case, means taking a collection of items of hardware (base unit, monitor, keyboard etc) and connecting them up to form a working system. You will be expected to be able to use the common connector types – USB, RJ45, PS/2 etc and to connect them without damage. This component is very closely allied to **Installing** in that it is part of the same process. You will not be expected to actually build the base unit, but, if at any time you need to install an additional card such as a graphics or sound card, then you could use that as evidence for this unit. That is the furthest you might be expected to go in terms of physical intrusion into the main system components and it should not be seen as essential. There are plenty of other external system components such as scanners, printers, web cams, zip-drives, etc, that will be just as suitable, so long as there is some element of setting up or installation involved (such as installing a driver and configuring associated software).

Now, having set up the system the next thing to do might be **Customising** the software to make it easier to use. The evidence for this component is very broad in nature, depending upon the particular software involved, however, there are some common features which should appear in most or all sets of evidence. The first feature is that the customisation should make the software easier to use in some way, either for an individual with special requirements, or a group who will all be using the software in a particular way. Secondly, the customisation should normally use standard customisation facilities built into the software, and not introduce additional software to change characteristics.

Now comes the actual use of the system. The first requirement is to **Access** remote networks (eg the Internet, Virtual Private Networks etc) and to use **Network** software – that is, software not installed on your own workstation, but on a remote server. This can be done as part of the normal work tasks and should not pose a problem. Then you can show that you can use a wide range of software **Tools and techniques** to get the best out of your software. Here, it is worth emphasising the words 'a wide range' – you must show that you can make full use of the software. Of course, if you are also doing a unit that involves substantial use of a particular type of software, then that evidence can be used for this unit as well.

Having used the system, accessed one or more remote networks and produced some work, you need to demonstrate that you are able to choose the most suitable and efficient method and media for storing and transferring data. You should show that you are aware of the effects of different transmission speeds, for instance, for broadband, USB1 and USB2, Firewire, ordinary dial-up modems. You don't need to be an expert on these technologies but you should be aware of their main characteristics and be able to use some of them to their best advantage. You should also be able to choose between, for instance, different types of CD and DVD media, floppy disks, zip drives, flash memory, hard disk drives, magnetic tape, etc so that you use the most appropriate one for your data.

Two important things emerge here – firstly that you should use as much evidence as possible from the rest of the qualification (so long as it is at the right level); secondly that the three tasks must be 'substantial and comprehensive' and produce something useful at the end – the demonstration of a series of unconnected skills and techniques is not acceptable.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

Most of the knowledge requirements for this unit are closely allied to individual requirements within the skills and techniques components. For instance, **Types of computer hardware** requires you to have a good, comprehensive knowledge of computer hardware that is available, how to choose the most appropriate for your requirements and how to connect it up. Much of this can be shown during the practical tasks, if you start off with a set of requirements for a workstation and then you provide details of the hardware that will satisfy that requirement, you can make good progress. Then, if you address the **Compatibility** issues with the equipment you are specifying and discuss the whole lot with your assessor, you should have covered three quarters of the knowledge.

At this level, you should have a fairly comprehensive knowledge of the Health and Safety issues affecting IT users – you should know how to assess an IT user environment for risks and then take steps to minimise those risks. You should then be able to explain those risks to other people and advise them how to minimise them. This is all part of the Level 3 principle that you should have more experience than quite a lot of those around you, and should be able to explain aspects of their job to them.

Lastly, your knowledge of software tools and functions and how to exploit them should be adequately demonstrated during the practical tasks - if not, the use of some 'what if' scenarios during a discussion with your assessor should fill in the gaps.

### **Summary**

This unit is one that will confirm your ability to actually operate a computer and to put it to good use. You will be using a variety of software packages, but you will need to show that you have the fundamental skills and knowledge common to all successful users of IT equipment. In addition, you will need to demonstrate good understanding of the capabilities of the hardware and software you are using, together with an ability to use those capabilities to the full. Much of the evidence could be generated as a result of other units, and you should be careful to use that evidence efficiently so that you are not duplicating work.

# IT MAINTENANCE FOR USERS LEVEL 1

## Unit 1C

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

For the purpose of this unit, 'maintenance' means the basic 'housekeeping' things that you as a user need to do to keep your part of the system physically clean and electronically efficient. It doesn't mean stripping down and repairing parts of the system – that is a job for the IT System Support practitioners. You, as a system user, will generally have very limited permission to do maintenance, but there are certain things that it would be normal for you to do. It is these that you need to show skill at in order to be successful in this unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

The skills part, as in everything else, contains some basic **Health and Safety** things that everyone must do around their own work space, so if you are doing things properly, you will already be satisfying the requirements of this component. The main areas are: checking your own working conditions, arranging your own workspace to suit you, and visually checking electrical connections before you start work.

The remainder is divided into two parts – the management of files on the system and the physical cleaning and replenishment of parts of the system (eg printer paper and toner). **Managing files** refers to the daily 'housekeeping' that you do to keep your own files well organised, easy to find and taking up as little space as possible. It includes logically naming files and folders so that the names give a good idea of what is in them, backing up your own files onto suitable media and deleting unwanted files. All this is routine and can be demonstrated easily to your assessor or an expert witness.

Next, comes the cleaning of parts of the system. In this case, at your level, this is likely to include the external surfaces of the printer, base unit and monitor (including the screen), the keyboard, and possibly the inside of the mouse. Dirt and debris on some parts will actually prevent the system from working properly – dirt on the internal mouse rollers for instance – so it is important that you keep them clean. The only dismantling to be done normally will be to remove the ball from some types of mouse and clean the internal moving surfaces. Otherwise, as a general rule, if what you are doing involves the use of a screwdriver or similar implement, the task is beyond this unit at this level.

Lastly, comes the replenishment of printer materials – namely ink cartridges, ribbons, toner and paper. You will be expected to carry out these tasks taking the appropriate precautions such as fanning and riffling the paper to prevent sheets sticking together, not clearing spilt toner with an ordinary vacuum cleaner, and disposing of waste in an environmentally friendly way.

#### How can I demonstrate knowledge?

The knowledge requirement is largely about what you are allowed to do, and whether or not you can do it safely. You should also know why maintenance is done and what could happen if it is not done. For instance, a workstation might be in a quite dirty environment with small debris likely to enter the keyboard keys. In this case, frequent cleaning – turning upside down and gently tapping – is necessary, otherwise some or all of the keys could stop working.

The safety knowledge specifically relates to the legislation governing the use of IT (just the bits that affect you in your workplace), the risks involved in using IT and the ways in which you lessen those risks to yourself and other people.

**Summary**

This unit is one which can be achieved in conjunction with most of the other units, simply because it requires the system in question to be in use for a considerable time. It is only then that the maintenance procedures become necessary. It may be that the unit is inappropriate for some candidates, simply because they are not permitted to carry out that kind of work on the system, but at this level, it is unlikely. The off-the job training and assessment in realistic working conditions should be considered if this unit is seen as essential to the candidate's qualification profile.

## IT MAINTENANCE FOR USERS LEVEL 2

### Unit 2C

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

The term 'maintenance' in this context means the actions that users can take on a system in order to prevent or slow down deterioration of various functions. It does not mean the ability to strip down and repair all or part of the system – that is a job for the IT System Support practitioners. You, as a system user, will generally have limited permission to do maintenance, but there are certain things that it would be normal for you to do. It is these that you need to show skill at in order to be successful in this unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

There are really two separate parts to the **Maintenance** of an IT system, the hardware side - cleanliness, safety and replenishment, and the software/operating system side – file management and performance. Well, at this level, you don't need to do anything with performance, except report poor levels of it. But you do need to do some management of files; for instance, you should show that you can change data saving settings such as auto-archiving and fast save timings. Other maintenance would include using the kind of file management tools that you find in any operating system, designed primarily to help the user in managing their system without bothering the support team too much. These tools are simple to use with very little user input; they check and repair file systems and sometimes databases, they also check and repair some software applications. They would be used on a regular basis with a frequency depending upon the amount of use the system gets, and would include disk checking and defragmentation. The schedule for this might well be set by the network manager, but you should be able to recognise when a system might need it outside of that schedule.

The **Hardware maintenance** is quite straightforward. Printers need to be cleaned and have paper, ink, toner replenished from time to time. Some printers have self-test and cleaning routines that need to be run from time to time. The manufacturer's instructions should be followed, and you could also keep a maintenance log.

Other **Cleaning** is important too, but you are **not** expected to remove panels or modules for cleaning. Base units need to be cleaned inside from time to time, but that is not a job for the average user, however, if there is an accumulation of dust and debris on the outside of a fan duct, then it can and should be removed. The only internal cleaning in this unit is that required, for instance, on a mouse, where the ball is removed and debris removed from the internal rollers and wheels. You should make sure that you take safety precautions such as removing power from the equipment and allowing a laser printer to cool before starting work. You should choose the correct cleaning methods and materials, according to manufacturer's guidance and local instructions.

Finally, you should be aware of safety issues on your system and where they are likely to occur. You should carry out, for instance, visual checks on the cables and perhaps just check that items such as USB connectors and power plugs are firmly seated. You should be able to examine how you personally use IT and do your own risk assessment. You should do this periodically to satisfy yourself and your manager that you are working safely.

This all sounds very fragmented and haphazard, but the end result will be a clean, safe, well-performing system that you are using in a safe manner, producing good quality professional work. Evidence will be there to see – the equipment itself, witness statements from your assessor or expert witness, and perhaps a set of user-maintenance logs for the system.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

A good deal of the knowledge requirements for this unit will have to be shown during training sessions or discussions with your assessor or expert witness. Much of the subject matter you will rarely actually see as a user, but the knowledge is nevertheless important. **Upgrading hardware and software** is often done during system down-time, when users are not there, however, you must have a good knowledge of what upgrading actually is and what effect it might have on the system as you use it. You might have to be re-trained on a new piece of software, or the change could be so subtle that you don't notice it. Either way, you should know the pros and cons of upgrading, the consequences of not upgrading, and the compatibility issues that might result (from your point of view as a system user). You should also know the broad principles of maintenance – how to tell routine from non-routine, and how to decide whether you should do it or leave it to the support professionals.

### **Summary**

This unit is one which can be achieved in conjunction with most of the other units, simply because it requires the system in question to be in use for a considerable time. It is only then that the maintenance procedures become necessary. It may be that the unit is inappropriate for some candidates, simply because they are not permitted to carry out that kind of work on the system. The off-the-job training and assessment in realistic working conditions should then be considered if this unit is seen as essential to the candidate's qualification profile.

# IT MAINTENANCE FOR USERS LEVEL 3

## Unit 3C

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to assist in the planning of and carry out **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

At this level, the IT maintenance process is about preventing the deterioration of parts of a system, and maintaining and enhancing its performance. It is about knowing how to get the best out of your system by using standard tools and techniques. It is not about changing items of hardware and software for higher performance items, but about being able to 'fine-tune' what you have got, carrying out regular and comprehensive maintenance procedures.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

There are really two separate parts to the **Maintenance** of an IT system, the hardware side - cleanliness, safety and replenishment, and the software/operating system side – file management and performance.

The **Hardware maintenance** is quite straightforward. Printers need to be cleaned and have paper, ink, toner replenished from time to time. Some printers have self-test and cleaning routines that need to be run from time to time. The manufacturer's instructions should be followed, and you could also keep a maintenance log.

Other **Cleaning** is important too, but you are **not** expected to remove panels or modules for cleaning. Base units need to be cleaned inside from time to time, but that is not a job for the average user. However, if there is an accumulation of dust and debris on the outside of a fan duct, then it can and should be removed. The only internal cleaning in this unit is that required, for instance, on a mouse, where the ball is removed and debris removed from the internal rollers and wheels. You should make sure that you take safety precautions such as removing power from the equipment and allowing a laser printer to cool before starting work. You should choose the correct cleaning methods and materials, according to manufacturer's guidance and local instructions.

Also at this level, you will need to show that you can carry out the more advanced operating system tuning procedures such as disk defragmentation, cleaning up unwanted files and other file management. It is permissible for a stand-alone laptop to be used for disk defragmentation in the event your organisation does not allow this procedure on a pc connected to their network.

You might need to check the size of parts of the file system allocated to specific file or data types to see if the allocation is sufficient. There is also a requirement to monitor and change some BIOS settings as necessary. A word of caution here – changing a BIOS setting in the wrong way can have a serious and sometimes permanent adverse effect on the way in which your system operates. You should not change BIOS settings just for the sake of it. However, some systems have useful features that are set up using the BIOS and you might be asked, or decide to set one of them up. Typical examples might be the hot-key start feature, useful if the base unit power switch is difficult to reach, the power management settings which might need to be altered from time to time, and the setting of passwords in addition to those for the operating system.

Lastly, on the subject of maintenance itself – at this level there is an extra requirement to **Enhance the performance** of your system. This really is an extension of the paragraph above and involves reviewing all the features of your particular system that have an effect upon performance and deciding what changes can be made. You should then make the changes that you are able to, and maybe discuss the ones you can't with a support technician. You should also be able to enhance performance by uninstalling some unwanted software and, of course, by installing maintenance and upgrade patches for your operating system and software applications.

Finally, **Avoiding health and safety risks** - you should be aware of safety issues on your system and where they are likely to occur. You should carry out, for instance, visual checks on the cables, and perhaps just check that items such as USB connectors and power plugs are firmly seated. You should be able to examine how you personally use IT and do your own risk assessment. You should do this periodically to satisfy yourself and your manager that you are working safely. In addition, you should be able to do the same for other people, making sure that they too are working safely, and advising them on basic health and safety matters.

There is plenty of scope in the foregoing paragraphs for three substantial and complex tasks, but remember that each must be coherent with a clearly defined tasking and outcome. A series of individual skills demonstrated one after the other with no common purpose is not acceptable.

### **How can I demonstrate knowledge?**

A good deal of the knowledge requirements for this unit will have to be shown during training sessions or discussions with your assessor or expert witness. Much of the subject matter you will rarely actually see as a user, but the knowledge is nevertheless important. **Upgrading hardware and software** is often done during system down-time, when users are not there. But you must have a good knowledge of what upgrading actually is and what effect it might have on the system as you use it. You should also know what information is generally required to help decisions about upgrades, including the financial implications. You might have to be re-trained on a new piece of software, or the change could be so subtle that you don't notice it. Either way, you should know the pros and cons of upgrading, the consequences of not upgrading, and the compatibility issues that might result (from your point of view as a system user). You should also know the principles of **Maintenance** – how to tell routine from non-routine, and how to decide whether you should do it or leave it to the support professionals. Also at this level, you have to relate your knowledge to other peoples' requirements too, so you need to be able to judge what others may need in order to carry out their own maintenance.

### **Summary**

This unit is one which can be achieved in conjunction with most of the other units, simply because it requires the system in question to be in use for a considerable time. It is only then that the maintenance procedures become necessary. It may be that the unit is inappropriate for some candidates, simply because they are not permitted to carry out that kind of work on the system. The off-the job training and assessment in realistic working conditions should then be considered if this unit is seen as essential to the candidate's qualification profile. At this level, there is some emphasis on working with other people and assisting or advising them in the maintenance task. This reflects the status of the likely candidate as being more experienced as a user and perhaps having more responsibility towards other, less experienced users. There is more emphasis on the wider implications of IT maintenance, particularly as regards financial and operational efficiency.

# IT TROUBLE-SHOOTING FOR USERS LEVEL 1

## Unit 1D

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

The first thing that you need to be clear on is that you won't be expected to fix your computer every time it goes wrong, but you will be expected to recognise certain common faults that are easy to fix. That way you can save a lot of time and money by not having to call out the support technician.

There are two main parts to this process – recognising that there is a fault and then doing something about it. If you do eventually have to call the help desk or a support technician, the first question you are likely to be asked is “Have you re-booted your PC?” - you need to be able to say “Yes” with the confidence that you did it correctly and that you have done all the basic things to try and solve the problem. That will save the technician (and you) a lot of time, because if the PC is still broken, there are certain things he/she will know haven't caused the problem.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

You need to demonstrate the use of two distinct types of basic remedy for common faults. First, you should be able to close and re-open a software application, avoiding data loss where possible, followed by a **Re-start** of the complete system (just your workstation if you are on a network) if the application does not re-start. Secondly, you should be able to use the online help files that come with your operating system and software applications to **Correct errors and problems**. You should limit this to things like checking the standard configuration, making sure the data files you are using are suitable, and following simple step-by-step instructions for setting user options. Anything more complicated than that is a job for someone more experienced – often a support technician or a supervisor.

So you should show that you can:

- Spot that there is a problem
- Identify possible causes of common problems
- Resolve simple problems by:
  - Re-starting the software and/or the system
  - Using manufacturer's guidelines or help files.

Clearly this kind of thing will probably not happen every day so you will need to take full advantage of each time you get a fault. Here are some hints that might help:

- Keep a fault log book at your workstation and write down all the problems that you have had and how you solved them. This need only be a small notebook, but it will help with evidence later on and will serve as a learning aid as well.
- If you do get a problem, before you do anything see if your assessor or expert witness is around. Ask him/her to watch you as you work through the problem – it might help if you can explain what you are doing as you go along. You might be asked some questions about what you are doing, mainly to see that you aren't just guessing, but that you know what you are doing.
- If you can't get someone to observe you, make some notes about the problem so that you can discuss it later.

### **How can I demonstrate knowledge?**

Some of the knowledge, as usual, will be demonstrated during the practical tasks, but of course they will be very limited in content and are very unlikely to involve many of the **Errors** that you could come across. So you will need to have some discussions with your assessor in which you can show your wider knowledge of common hardware and software faults. Many of these faults tend to be caused by users either using the wrong procedure or trying to get software and hardware to do something it isn't designed to do. For example, you might be trying to copy a large file onto a disk with very little room on it; this will produce a disk error, and you should know both the cause and the remedy. The thing to remember here is 'keep it simple' – you won't have to remember complicated technical details, but you should know about the simple, commonly occurring errors. You should also know how to get basic system information to enable a help-desk technician to help you with your problem.

When you get an error and you have not been able to fix it, you must be able to recognise the point where you should call for help and **Advice**. To do this, you must be aware of your own limitations, both in ability and in what you are actually *allowed* to do by your employer. You should be able to explain this clearly to your assessor. Having decided that you need advice, you need to be able to follow procedures to contact whoever you need to give you that advice. Finally, you need to show that you know how to follow verbal instructions from an IT expert – including doing *exactly* what you are asked to do, confirming to the expert that you have done it, and giving *accurate* feedback on the results.

### **Summary**

This unit covers the very basic requirements to deal with commonly occurring, simple errors that crop up from time to time when using any hardware/software system. It is not intended to be a technical unit, rather another aspect of the skill of using a computer. Its purpose is to encourage users to develop the skill of sorting out the simple errors from the complicated ones and taking some steps to resolve or at least gather information. In that way, the support technician is released to spend more time on the faults that the users can't fix.

# IT TROUBLE-SHOOTING FOR USERS LEVEL 2

## Unit 2D

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

No IT system is ever completely error free no matter how well it is set up. Normally, problems are investigated and fixed by systems support technicians, and users are very restricted in what they can do. However, there are certain actions that a user can take that will either fix a simple problem or at least gather some useful information to help the support team. This unit is focussed on those actions. You should not go beyond that which you are normally allowed to do, without discussion with your supervisor and your assessor. Should a situation arise where you are not permitted to take some of the actions required by the unit, then you should discuss alternative arrangements with your assessor.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

You need to demonstrate the use of two distinct types of basic remedy for common faults. Firstly, you should be able to carry out a **Re-start** using all the available methods (shut down and cold boot, re-boot, etc), having looked at the symptoms and decided that a re-start is the correct action.

Secondly, you need to show that you can use other, previously tried, methods of fixing your particular problem, namely the basic detect and repair tools included in some software applications and most operating systems. There may be other actions particular to your system and/or software that are specifically authorised, such as re-configuration or re-insertion of data, which are written down step-by-step for you to follow. Of course, you then need to show that you know how to tell that an error has been corrected by the remedial action. One of the classic situations that you could use for part of this unit is the untimely appearance of a virus. Assuming your anti-virus software has detected and probably quarantined it, there are certain actions you can take which will provide useful evidence for this unit.

The evidence gathering for this unit will be very opportunistic – faults never crop up to order and they usually happen at inconvenient times. You should be prepared to take notes, take screen shots of the error messages and any screens showing actions that you take. You should also discuss the incident with your assessor or expert witness to clarify that you knew what you were doing and that you did all you were allowed to do to fix the problem. Remember that often a simple re-start will fix a problem, but you need to show that you can also spot when it will not.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

In the process of looking at **Errors** and minor faults, and making decisions about them, you will inevitably show your knowledge of how they happen and how they affect different hardware and software. You will always get problems while you are using software for the other units, so this unit will be completed very much as a result of doing the others.

You should know where to go to get **Advice and how to obtain it** – of course you should only do what you are allowed by your employer, but advice can be obtained from help files, manufacturers' websites etc. and not necessarily used. So to show that you know where to access advice, you could do a search for it while doing the Internet and intranets unit.

You should finally have a good basic knowledge of compatibility issues – if you are doing the 'Operate a Computer' unit, you might already have demonstrated this component.

**Summary**

This is a unit that can be done in conjunction with any of the other units, simply because the opportunities to provide evidence can only crop up while you are actually using a computer. If you are skilled in the process of classifying errors and other problems as 'I can fix this' and 'I can't fix this' then you are halfway to completing the unit. You then need to demonstrate the use of a number of appropriate tools and facilities to fix the 'I can fix this' ones, along with a demonstration of a good understanding of the other relevant issues, and the unit is complete.

# IT TROUBLE-SHOOTING FOR USERS LEVEL 3

## Unit 3D

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to assist in the planning of and carry out **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

No IT system is ever completely error free no matter how well it is set up. Normally, problems are investigated and fixed by systems support technicians, and users are very restricted in what they can do. However, some advanced users may be able to take more comprehensive action in order to diagnose and attempt to remedy a serious fault, which may involve the removal and re-installation of some software, or perhaps the use of a standard system recovery disk. This unit is focussed on those actions. You should not go beyond that which you are normally allowed to do, without discussion with your supervisor and your assessor. Should a situation arise where you are not permitted to take some of the actions required by the unit, then you should discuss alternative arrangements with your assessor. This unit need not be assessed in the workplace.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

There are two components in this part – **Restarting** and **Correcting errors**. The **Restart** process at this level could include re-booting the operating system into a 'safe' mode for diagnostic and repair purposes; this might be used in case of the more serious system failures as one of the early diagnostic and recovery actions, where the system will not boot normally. It could also include using a recovery disk or installing and re-installing a corrupted software package, and the use of a self diagnosis/repair function sometimes included in large software suites. This ties in neatly with the **Correcting errors** component, where you are asked to gather information about the problem, diagnose technically complex/serious problems and work out how to fix them. Now the process might well stop there because the solution is beyond your authority or technical ability – you do not necessarily have to fix the problem yourself. Remember that this unit is about 'troubleshooting', meaning the process by which problems are recognised and diagnosed. A **Restart** is an aid to that troubleshooting, which may also fix the problem in the process. A selection of these advanced operator techniques should be included in the three substantial and complex tasks so that there is a good overall coverage of the different types of problem to be dealt with.

#### How can I demonstrate knowledge?

At this level, you need to have a more comprehensive knowledge of problems that could occur on your system and how you can take steps towards dealing with them. Some of the time you will be able to deal with the problem yourself, but in many cases you will have to call in technical support. It is here that the ability to gather information through observation and the use of diagnostic tools really pays dividends – the more comprehensive a report you can give the support technician, the quicker your system is going to be fixed. So first of all, you need to be familiar with technically complex **Errors** associated with software installation and various Internet connections. Probably the most difficult type of error to deal with is the intermittent one, so you will need to be aware of different types of intermittent errors and their characteristics. All of this may be demonstrated in the course of your three tasks, or during guided discussions with your assessor.

At this level, you not only need to know where to get **Advice** about technically complex problems, but should also know how to pass on advice, on the more simple or common errors, to others so that they can resolve them on their own machines.

Lastly, you should be aware of the variety of **Compatibility** issues relating to the interaction of hardware, software and operating systems. You should be aware, for instance, of the lists of compatible hardware issued by the manufacturers of various operating systems, the issues concerning various types of storage media - particularly standards of CD and DVD, and of system and operating system requirements for different software packages. Again, this may be demonstrated during the three tasks, but will need to be completed by means of a guided discussion with your assessor.

### **Summary**

This unit is aimed at the 'senior' user who has significant responsibility for the care and wellbeing of their own system. It does not require intrusive operations to diagnose or repair the system, but it does call for knowledge of some of those processes. There is a fine line between what an operator should be able to do at this level and what a support technician is expected to do on the same system. The operator's job at this level can be seen as a direct interface with the support technician, taking responsibility for some preliminary, non-intrusive trouble shooting, which might result in the problem being fixed. If it isn't fixed, then the experienced operator can greatly assist in the further diagnosis by passing on accurate, comprehensive diagnostic information to the support staff.

# IT SECURITY FOR USERS LEVEL 1

## Unit 1E

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

Although this is one of the smaller units in terms of content, it is one of the most important. Every IT user, no matter who they are or what level they are at, has a responsibility to use their part of the system safely and securely. This means following proper procedures to make sure that viruses and other damaging files do not get into the system and that unauthorised people don't have access to it. All system users have a part to play in this and it's very important that everyone does their bit. Success in this unit will confirm that you are contributing to the safe and secure operation of your system by following the basic security procedures and guidelines.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

There is only one component here – entitled '**Protecting**'. Most of the evidence for this unit will probably be produced while you are doing some of the other units such as Internet and intranets, E-mail and Word processing software. Procedures like **Logging on** to the system using your username and password, and **Backing up** data will be part of most of the other units. You may not actively **Use anti-virus software** because it is always running in the background. But you should be in the habit of virus-scanning files before you put them onto the system from a disk, the Internet, etc.

Lastly, the **Safe storage of personal data and software** covers quite a number of things. Clearly any software disks need to be stored securely, but that will probably be done by your network manager; nevertheless you should be aware of how to do it. 'Personal data' generally means data about other people that is held on the system and will, of course, be on any back-ups that you take. This is all subject to the Data Protection Act and you should show that you can take proper precautions to protect it. The other type of 'personal data' is often forgotten or ignored. This is the detail of your username, password and other access codes you may have been given. You should be able to show that you are very careful with this information, not giving it to anyone else (inside or outside the company) and not writing it down anywhere. If, for instance, you have it displayed on a 'post-it' note stuck to your monitor, you will **not** satisfy the requirements of this unit.

#### How can I demonstrate knowledge?

Most of the knowledge you need is about the kind of things (**Security risks**) that can happen to data if you don't follow basic security procedures or if there is a problem with the hardware or software. You should be able to discuss, in simple terms, things like data theft and how to avoid it, viruses and what they can do to data and systems, dangers from e-mail attachments and how to minimise them, and lastly the subject of **Controlling access** to hardware and why it is so important. Remember that you are not expected to be an IT security expert, but you should know about some of the basic issues and how to deal with them. All this should be done with reference to your own part of the system (ie your workstation) and your normal working environment.

Finally, you should be aware of the various **Laws and guidelines** that deal with computer and data security, particularly on the Data Protection Act, the Computer Misuse Act, and the law relating to things such as SPAM, identity theft and so on. With all of these things, you need to know enough to work legally and safely within your own working environment – this information is very likely to have been given to you by your employer as part of the instructions and procedures you work to every day, but it may not specifically say that a particular work procedure complies with a particular legal requirement. You may need a discussion with your supervisor so that you clearly understand the very basic legal information, and can relate it to your working procedures.

**Summary**

This is an important unit that will show that you are a responsible computer user who is aware of the main dangers to systems and data, and actively practices measures to combat them. It is about protecting a very valuable resource – data – and the systems that allow us to work with it. Success in this unit will depend upon your ability to practice secure working methods as a matter of habit, and upon your having a good working knowledge of the basics of practical IT security.

# IT SECURITY FOR USERS LEVEL 2

## Unit 2E

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

Although this is one of the smaller units in terms of content, it is one of the most important. It is the responsibility of every computer user, whether on a network or not, to use the equipment safely and securely. The consequences of allowing one of the many viruses, worms, Trojan horses, etc, to invade a system and do its work are often very damaging for the system, data and any business that the system supports. So it's vital that you can demonstrate not only a sense of responsibility when using IT systems, but a good knowledge of how to use the standard protection systems available.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

There is only one component here – entitled '**Protecting**'. Most of the evidence for this unit will be produced while you are doing some of the other units such as Internet and intranets, E-mail and Word processing software. For instance, if, as part of the Internet and intranets unit, you find yourself downloading a file as part of the '**Exchanging information**' component, make sure that first of all you actually take precautions with it (eg virus scan), and secondly, you make sure that your assessor/expert witness is aware of those precautions. Make sure that files have a password or are set to 'read only', or whatever else you need to do to stop people from changing, accessing, stealing or destroying your work.

**Downloading software patches** from the Internet to improve security in your operating system might not be something you are allowed to do on your system – it does have its own security implications – but you should know how to do it, and where to get the patches from. So you might have to do that off-the-job under more controlled conditions. You should also show that you are suitably cautious when dealing with e-mail, particularly the attachments that often appear with it. You should show that you can do a virus scan on a file or item of storage media, and you should also be aware of facilities available for web-based mail to filter out unwanted and/or dangerous items. **Backing up data** is another security measure that you could take to demonstrate awareness and practice of security procedures.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

A good deal of the knowledge will come from you actually doing things on the system, but you will have to be much more obvious about when and how you do it. Security is generally something that exists in the background, and no-one really notices until it doesn't work, like a virus getting through, some data getting damaged, or someone logging on using your details. You will need to discuss with your assessor and/or expert witness the whole question of security and what is available to help you with it. The requirement is quite straightforward, but you should demonstrate three fundamental things:

- An awareness of what can happen (**Security risks**)
- An awareness of how it can happen and what harm it can do (**Security risks**)
- An awareness of precautions you should take to avoid security problems (**Control access**)

Finally, you should be aware of the various **Laws and guidelines** that deal with computer and data security, with particular emphasis on the Data Protection Act, the Computer Misuse Act, and legislation relating to things such as SPAM, identity theft and so on. With all of these things, the requirement is not to know every minute detail, but to know that these laws and guidelines exist, why they exist, and what you need to do to avoid falling foul of them.

**Summary**

This is an important unit that will show that you are a responsible computer user who is aware of the main dangers to systems and data, and actively practices measures to combat them. It is about protecting a very valuable resource – data – and the systems that allow us to work with it. Success in this unit will depend upon your ability to practice secure working methods as a matter of habit, and upon your having a good working knowledge of the day-to-day aspects of practical IT security.

# IT SECURITY FOR USERS LEVEL 3

## Unit 3E

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to assist in the planning of and carry out **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

Although this is one of the smaller units in terms of content, it is one of the most important. It is the responsibility of every computer user, whether on a network or not, to use the equipment safely and securely. The consequences of allowing one of the many viruses, worms, Trojan horses, etc, to invade a system and do its work are often very damaging for the system, data and any business that the system supports. At this level it is assumed that you have the additional responsibility of overseeing other users' working practices to make sure they make best use of the security available to them. It is also likely that you will have some responsibility for planning and implementing plans to deal with events that are potentially dangerous to the system and its data.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

There is only one component here – entitled '**Protecting**'. Most of the evidence for this unit will be produced while you are doing some of the other units such as Internet and intranets, E-mail and Word processing software. For instance, if, as part of the Internet and intranets unit, you find yourself downloading a file as part of the '**Exchanging information**' component, make sure that first of all you actually take precautions with it (eg virus scan), and secondly, you make sure that your assessor/expert witness is aware of those precautions. Make sure that files have a password or are set to 'read only', or whatever else you need to do to stop people from changing, accessing, stealing or destroying your work.

**Downloading software patches** from the Internet to improve security in your operating system might not be something you are allowed to do on your system – it does have its own security implications – but you should know how to do it, and where to get the patches from. So you might have to do that off-the-job under more controlled conditions. You should also show that you are suitably cautious when dealing with e-mail, particularly the attachments that often appear with it. You should show that you can do a virus scan on a file or item of storage media, and you should also be aware of facilities available for web-based mail to filter out unwanted and/or dangerous items. **Backing up data** is another security measure that you could take to demonstrate awareness and practice of security procedures.

In addition to the above, which is really to do with your own personal use of IT, you need to have significant input into the way other people use the security measures available to them. For instance, the use of passwords is a universal problem – people choose easy, obvious passwords, then write them down and store them near their PC so they don't forget. All this plays into the hands of the system intruder. You should be able to advise on the better use of passwords and supervise them in their operation of other security measures. You should also take an active part in the planning of contingency measures to minimise the effects of security breaches and other disasters. While you may not be able to contribute to the finer technical detail, as an experienced IT user, you should be able to help with the practical implementation of a contingency plan.

### **How can I demonstrate knowledge?**

A good deal of the knowledge will come from you actually doing things on the system, but you will have to be much more obvious about when and how you do it. Security is generally something that exists in the background, and no-one really notices until it doesn't work, like a virus getting through, some data getting damaged, or someone logging on using your details. You will need to discuss with your assessor and/or expert witness the whole question of security and what is available to help you with it. The discussion should centre on the following:

- **Security risks** to systems connected to the Internet (from viruses, Trojan horses, someone taking control of the system from outside, etc)
- **Security risks** to systems from disasters (fire, flood, explosion, massive power surge, etc)
- Ways to improve protection of data (different access levels for individuals, better physical security, increased back-up)
- Ways to improve Internet security (improved firewalls, encryption, anti-virus software, etc)

Finally, you should be aware of the various **Laws and guidelines** that deal with computer and data security, with particular emphasis on the Data Protection Act, the Computer Misuse Act, and legislation relating to things such as SPAM, identity theft and so on. With all of these things, the requirement is not to know every minute detail, but to know that these laws and guidelines exist, why they exist, and what you and other people need to do to avoid falling foul of them. You should show that you know how to pass on that information to other people.

### **Summary**

This is an important unit that will show that you are a responsible computer user who is aware of the main dangers to systems and data, and actively practices measures to combat them. It is about protecting a very valuable resource – data – and the systems that allow us to work with it. Success in this unit will depend upon your ability to practice secure working methods as a matter of habit, and upon your having a good working knowledge of the day-to-day aspects of practical IT security. In addition, at this level, success in this unit will require you to take an active part in planning and implementing security measures in your immediate working environment, and passing on advice and information to other, less experienced IT users. Any tasks used for assessment must be coherent, with a clearly defined aim and an overall outcome that can be related to the unit components. A continuous demonstration of un-connected skills with no identifiable, useful outcome is not acceptable.

# ARTWORK AND IMAGING SOFTWARE LEVEL 1

## Unit 1F

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

To successfully complete this unit, you need to show that you can create, manipulate and check simple artwork and images and add appropriate text. This could be a digital photograph, a simple image using geometric shapes and colours, or perhaps something using imported clipart. Anything you produce should be quite simple in structure – if you use a photograph, you will not be expected to do very much with it, perhaps alter its size and shape a little to suit a particular purpose. The various techniques must not be demonstrated on their own without any real purpose. They should all be used as part of a task that starts with a set of instructions and finishes with an image or piece of artwork that communicates something.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

You should first of all be very clear as to what it is you are required to produce and who the target audience is supposed to be. You should be aware of how much memory space you have available, and from that you can decide the **file formats** you can use.

To create the image you should then open the appropriate software application and create the image. Between the two tasks you will use for assessment, you should cover a range of techniques and simple image types, including drawing simple shapes using lines and pre-formed objects such as arrows and boxes. You could also download a suitable photograph from a digital camera and make adjustments to it, such as sizing and cropping. The techniques you could use are many, and one way of demonstrating more of them might be to produce more than one version of your image so that the person you are producing it for has a range from which to choose. You will probably also have to add some text to the illustration.

The final product needs to be **checked** over to make sure that it is what it was intended to be. Make sure that it fits the description or design that you were given, and also make sure that it gives the information that it is supposed to. Does it fit on the page? Is it aligned correctly? Are the colours OK? The important thing is that you have produced something that does the job that it is supposed to do.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

Clearly you won't be able to cover all of the types of simple image or artwork in just two tasks, so you should be prepared to discuss your knowledge with your assessor. You will need to be able to talk at a basic level about how you could produce images and simple artwork using methods other than those you have used. You don't even, necessarily, have to be able to use all the methods, but you do have to know that they exist and what they are for. For instance, if you haven't done anything with digital photographs in your tasks, then you should at least know that it is possible (and quite simple) to import a photo, change its size and cut it down (cropping) so that only the bit that you need is left. You should also be aware of some of the other forms of images and general artwork that you could use, together with some of the file formats and their main features such as size, compression, etc. Also, you should be able to discuss the very basics of the laws and guidelines that affect you when you are producing images and artwork for publication.

**Summary**

This unit is focussed on the process of producing artwork and other images for inclusion in documents such as brochures, advertising leaflets, and even web pages. The main tasks should be focussed on the process of production, starting with the basic specification and, perhaps, sketches, and ending with the completed work being used, maybe as part of a larger piece of work. The skills and techniques involved should not all be demonstrated as separate, isolated items, but should be used as part of a main task. Any demonstration of remaining skills that the assessor feels necessary, should be done on another real work piece.

# ARTWORK AND IMAGING SOFTWARE LEVEL 2

## Unit 2F

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

This unit requires the use of software to produce documents that are primarily composed of images of some kind, supported by appropriately formatted text. As some of the artwork must be actually produced using the software, it is very unlikely that even the most versatile word processing application would be appropriate. The emphasis is on communicating via images supported by text, and because the images may well come from different sources, a certain amount of quality matching will be necessary. That alone is beyond the scope of the word processor.

The two 'comprehensive' tasks should be the source of most if not all of the evidence for this unit – the skills and techniques should be demonstrated as part of a coherent piece of work, rather than as individual, isolated items. Clearly there is a broad spread of image types that could be used in a task, but it would be inappropriate to use them all in one task. The tasks should, therefore, be chosen carefully to include a broad range between them. It is also clearly impractical to ask you to include every conceivable type in your work. Besides, in your work you may not have access to all types anyway. Your assessor will help you to choose appropriate tasks.

It is important to remember that the emphasis in this unit is on the *creation* of drawings, artwork and images for inclusion in your work – not merely to import them from another source. One possible scenario is that someone else has written the words, and you have been asked to create the illustrations and put it all together. For that reason, you should start with a clear statement of what your objective is, what material has been provided and what material you are required to produce. There should also be a clear statement, with sketches, etc, of the proposed layout of the finished piece. All of this is good working practice, anyway.

Next, you should **create the artwork** and other images, perhaps creating one or two different versions, and saving interim stages. It will then be much easier to demonstrate a wider series of skills and techniques. **Insertion, manipulation and editing** the images is the next stage – you could use the opportunity of preparing them with different filters and other effects to try out a number of options. Again, you will be demonstrating a wider range of skills and techniques within the bounds of good working practice. When **checking the images**, you could possibly keep a brief log of all the resolutions, filters, etc so that if they have to be changed for any reason, at least you know the starting point – another good piece of evidence.

Lastly, there is the **check on the text** and the final look through to make sure the whole piece looks professional and will communicate the intended information. You will be aware that imported text may not have been formatted to suit the work that you are doing – it may be an idea to make a note of the changes you make for future reference.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

Here, the issues of **producing information** and producing **artwork and images** should have been amply covered in the two tasks that you have completed. To an extent, the **file formats** should have been covered as well, but that may have to be expanded in discussion with your assessor. There will be a number of important formats that you will not have used (you can't use them all in two tasks!), but nevertheless you should have a good knowledge of them and their characteristics. Most notable of these are those used in websites and print publishing.

Finally, you should be familiar with the legislation and associated guidelines to do with the publishing of images. There are a surprising number of them, ranging from the Data Protection Act, through the obscenity legislation, to international copyright. All are important and will have a direct bearing on whether the images that you put into your work can be used for their intended purpose. If you know that in advance and can ask yourself 'can I use this, is it copyrighted, do I need permission?' etc, then you will save a great deal of time later on.

### **Summary**

This unit, like most of the others is about starting with a particular requirement for an illustrated document that is intended to communicate certain information to a particular audience, and creating the finished article that will fulfil that requirement. In doing so, you will have used one of a family of software applications that is specifically designed for the creation and manipulation of images.

# ARTWORK AND IMAGING SOFTWARE LEVEL 3

## Unit 3F

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

To successfully complete this unit, you need to be creating, working with and using effectively the most complex artwork and images. These images will often be very detailed and technically difficult to create; the subtle changes you might introduce into different versions of, say a photograph or an abstract image will have a significant impact on the meaning and interpretation of the piece in which it appears.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

This unit requires the use of software to produce documents that are primarily composed of images of some kind, supported by appropriately formatted text. As some of the artwork must be actually produced using the software, it is very unlikely that even the most versatile word processing application would be appropriate. The emphasis is on communicating via images supported by text, and because the images may well come from different sources, a certain amount of quality matching will be necessary. That alone is beyond the scope of the word processor.

The three 'complex' tasks should be the source of most if not all of the evidence for this unit – the skills and techniques should be demonstrated as part of a coherent piece of work, rather than as individual, isolated items. Clearly there is a broad spread of image types that could be used in a task, but it might be inappropriate to use them all in one task. The tasks should, therefore, be chosen carefully to include a broad range between them. It is also clearly impractical to ask you to include every conceivable type in your work. Besides, in your work you may not have access to all types anyway. Your assessor will help you to choose appropriate tasks.

It is important to remember that the emphasis in this unit is on the **creation** of drawings, artwork and images for inclusion in your work – not merely to import them from another source. You will probably have been given an outline of the finished work, but it will be up to you to choose the methods, formats and finer detail for the artwork. For that reason, you should start with a clear statement of what your objective is, what material has been provided and what material you are required to produce. You should also clearly understand the message that is to be contained in the work and the audience at whom it is aimed. There should be a clear statement, with sketches, etc. of the proposed layout of the finished piece, reflecting that message and target audience. All of this is good working practice, anyway.

Next you should **create the artwork** and other images, perhaps creating one or two different versions, and saving interim stages. You should use as many of the advanced techniques (layers, 3D, etc.) as is reasonable for the task. **Insertion, manipulation and editing** the images is the next stage – you could use the opportunity of preparing them with different filters and other effects to try out a number of options. Again, you will be demonstrating a wider range of skills and techniques within the bounds of good working practice. When **checking the images**, you could possibly keep a brief log of all the resolutions, filters, etc so that if they have to be changed for any reason, at least you know the starting point – another good piece of evidence.

Lastly there is the **check on the text** and the final look through to make sure the whole piece looks professional and will communicate the intended information. You will be aware that imported text may not have been formatted to suit the work that you are doing – it may be an idea to make a note of the changes you make for future reference. Lastly, you should check that the completed work is 'fit for purpose' – for instance if it is for use on a website, check that it loads at an

acceptable rate; if it is to be printed, check that the file is in the correct format for the printers and that the colours are acceptable when printed using CMYK.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

Because of the complexity of the work you will be doing and the greater decision making power you are likely to have, you need to have a good grasp of a number of more advanced subjects. Firstly you need to be very aware of the issues of structure and content to suit different audiences and contexts. You need to be able to answer questions such as “what are the various audiences for this piece and how can I get the information across to them so that they understand and respect it?” “Is this structure suitable for the medium (television, print, web page) it will be used in?”

Next you need to know what techniques are available and how they are applied to produce the technically complex work required at this level. You also need to be able to choose appropriate **file formats** for your work, with the proper compression ratios, using a well-informed knowledge of the subject. You should be able to make statements, for instance that “this file format is suitable for the work because ..... and it will not damage ‘abc’ ..... and it will only lose ‘x’% definition when converted to ..... ‘y’ format.”

Lastly, and very importantly, you must be very familiar with the **laws and guidelines** relating to the work that you produce. You must be able to identify where there may be legal problems, perhaps with copyright, and to be able to explain the problem clearly to a client, manager etc.

### **Summary**

This unit, like most of the others is about starting with a particular requirement for an illustrated document that is intended to communicate certain information to a particular audience, and creating the finished article that will fulfil that requirement. In doing so, you will have used one of a family of software applications that is specifically designed for the creation and manipulation of images. You will also have used advanced techniques and have played a significant part in deciding the final form and structure of the work.

# INTERNET AND INTRANETS LEVEL 1

## Unit 1G

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

This unit requires you to demonstrate your skill in using one of the most frequently used information exchange and gathering systems. There are countless variations of it in use on the Internet, and on the intranets of many large organisations. The fact is that they are all basically the same – they do the same things, not all of them have all of the same features, but they are all part of the same family. So let's look at how you can use one of these systems to successfully complete the unit:

#### Information and customising

You will need to have some kind of browser software so that you can access web pages on the Internet. The settings will probably be quite standard, but if you do have any difficulties in using the browser like that, you should ask for help in adjusting it so that it is comfortable for you. At level 1 you will not be required to do any setting up. However, if you do know how to set up your browser, then show your assessor, as this will be useful for when you progress to a higher level.

The requirements for **searching** for and **evaluating information** are really quite straightforward. You might, for instance, be asked to provide the answer to one or more questions, using the search facilities. You should first be sure that you understand the question and the kind of answer you might expect. Then use the search engine you have been told to use to carry out searches. Next you need to access the search engine page and enter your search criteria. To illustrate this process, you could, for instance take screen shots of the search page with your search criteria entered, followed by one of the results page.

Having got your search results, you will need to sift through them and log on to the web pages that seem to contain the information you want. At this stage, you should decide on the best sources of your information – these could be sources of a particular category or type of information – and bookmark them so that you can find them quicker next time. You might have to search often for information on a particular subject, so this facility is useful. You should also keep records of, maybe the best search engine for a particular subject. This will all be part of the **finding and evaluating** requirement. You will eventually end up with one or more answers to the original question – you could set up a short list of the most likely answers, select the most reliable answer and justify your choice. Remember, the answer may *look* credible, but is the source reliable?

**Exchanging information** can be demonstrated in a number of ways. You could, for instance use a web-based electronic portfolio system for your qualification (your assessment centre may offer that facility); the process of submitting evidence, building your electronic portfolio and communicating with your assessor through the site would satisfy much of this part of the unit. The use of *web-based* mail and discussion groups are two of many other possibilities. However, the use of ordinary e-mail is covered by another unit and is not generally appropriate here.

You should look at the 'skills and techniques' requirements and make sure that your Internet and intranet activities cover all the things in each list. Ask your assessor for guidance if you are not sure.

**How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

Many of the knowledge requirements can be met during the practical assessment tasks. A little thought will allow you to combine even more of the knowledge with the practical tasks. How about, for instance, doing a search for laws and guidelines applicable to the use of IT? You should keep your search quite narrow, because you really only need to know about how these laws and guidelines affect you at work or at home. They will include the procedures and restrictions your employer requires you to observe. A discussion of your search results with your assessor would produce some very useful knowledge and practical evidence, and would deal with a rather dry, but necessary subject in a slightly more interesting way.

**Summary**

To successfully complete this unit you need to demonstrate a practical ability to use Internet technology for the purpose for which it was originally intended – the finding, evaluation and sharing of information for the common good. You need to demonstrate a good knowledge of the basics – how to connect, how to quickly search for simple information, how to communicate efficiently and politely and how to avoid some of the more common problems that occur when using the system.

# INTERNET AND INTRANETS LEVEL 2

## Unit 2G

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

This unit requires you to demonstrate your skill in using one of the most frequently used information exchange and gathering systems. There are countless variations of it in use on the Internet, and on the intranets of many large organisations. The fact is that they are all basically the same – they do the same things, not all of them have all of the same features, but they are all part of the same family. So let's look at how you can use one of these systems to successfully complete the unit.

#### Information and customising

**Customising** your browser software to make things easier is self-explanatory and is quite easy to do. Your assessor will evaluate your browser and associated software and will tell you what you need to do. Essentially you should start from the browser's default settings and then demonstrate the process of customisation, with the result that the browser performs better for you. It is difficult to generalise on what you will need to do, because everyone has slightly different requirements - their eyesight is different, their systems vary, and there are many combinations of software in use.

The requirements for **searching** for and **evaluating** information are really part of the same process. You might, for instance, be asked to provide the answer to one or more questions, using the search facilities. You should first be sure that you understand the question and the kind of answer you might expect. Then use your knowledge of the types of search (web search, meta-search, Boolean, etc) to decide which one might be the best in this case. You should be able to explain your decision and the reason for it.

Next, you need to access the search engine page and enter your search criteria. To illustrate this process, you could, for instance take screen shots of the search page with your search criteria entered, followed by one of the results page. Having got your search results, you will need to sift through them, maybe by doing another search *within* the existing search results for more precise information (many search engines have this facility). This process will be part of the **finding and evaluating** requirement. You will eventually end up with one or more answers to the original question – you should provide a short list of the most likely answers, select the most reliable answer and justify your choice. Remember, the answer may *look* credible, but is the source reliable?

**Exchanging information** can be demonstrated in a number of ways. You could, for instance, use a web-based electronic portfolio system for your qualification (your assessment centre may offer that facility); the process of submitting evidence, building your electronic portfolio and communicating with your assessor through the site would satisfy much of this part of the unit. Uploading and downloading files from an FTP site as part of an exchange of information, or the use of *web-based* mail and discussion groups are two of many other possibilities, however, the use of ordinary e-mail is covered by another unit and is not generally appropriate here.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

The knowledge requirements are largely self explanatory – many of the requirements can be met in the course of completing the practical assessment tasks. A little thought will allow you to combine even more of the knowledge with the practical tasks. How about, for instance, doing a search for laws and guidelines applicable to the use of IT? A discussion of your search results with your assessor would produce some very useful knowledge and practical evidence, and would deal with a rather dry, but necessary subject in a slightly more interesting way.

**Summary**

To successfully complete this unit you need to demonstrate a practical ability to use Internet technology for the purpose for which it was originally intended – the finding, evaluation and sharing of information for the common good. This should be backed up with knowledge of issues affecting the use of the technology, such as security, legislation and software features.

# INTERNET AND INTRANETS LEVEL 3

## Unit 3G

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit requires you to demonstrate your skill in using one of the most frequently used information exchange and gathering systems. There are countless variations of it in use on the Internet, and on the intranets of many large organisations. The fact is that they are all basically the same – they do the same things, not all of them have all of the same features, but they are all part of the same family. At this level, you will need to demonstrate not only that you can use system properly, but that you are able to use it in a complex way to perform complex tasks. You should use **both** an intra-net (where possible) and the Internet to satisfy the requirements of this unit.

### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

#### Information and customising

**Customising** your browser software to make things easier for yourself is self-explanatory and is quite easy to do. You will need to show your assessor that you understand and use fully the facilities available on your browser, such as security and privacy settings, connections and customising views. Essentially you should start from the browser's default settings and then demonstrate the process of customisation, with the result that the browser performs better for you.

It is difficult to generalise on what you will need to do, because everyone has slightly different requirements - their eyesight is different, their systems are vary, and there are many combinations of software in use. After you have done that, you need to show your assessor that you can maintain the performance of your browser software using settings such as history and temporary files, and including all of the 'advanced' facilities. In other words, you must be able to make the fullest possible use of your browser software.

**Searching** for information is a skill that can only be learned by doing. There are a number of standard search methods available – some work better than others on different search engines. Here you should demonstrate the use of a range of methods which might include Boolean (using AND, NOT, OR, +, - and so on), wild cards (putting a \* instead of a letter or letters to widen the search) and meta searches (using key words and other codes to search for items with corresponding meta tags). You should also be able to discuss the subject of searches with your assessor and demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of techniques.

The requirements for **finding** and **evaluating information** are more extensive at this level. You need to choose substantial subjects to show your skill in finding information. You should not just search for one piece of information, but for a number of items – all related – that can be put together to form a useful piece of work, perhaps a marketing report, newsletter or a conference presentation. They should ideally come from different sources, each source being separately evaluated for a number of different features. These features are likely to include the following:

- Validity – it is well known that for every website containing correct, up-to-date information, there are thousands that do not. The information could be 12 or 18 months old. You should justify your choice as being known reliable sources.
- Bias – you should beware of vested interest; for example, you *might* think that the information about the incidence of lung disease in smokers on a tobacco producer's website *could* have some bias that might play down the severity of the problem.
- Relevance – is the information really about your subject, or does it merely mention it and then goes on to something else?
- Reliability – is the source trustworthy, or is the information merely a collection of misunderstood facts put together out of context by an amateur?

- Sufficiency – exactly what it says: is there enough for your purposes? There may be a lot of words, but they may say very little and you will need to extract carefully the hidden facts.

**Exchanging information** really comes in two parts. Firstly, there is the existing information. You need to show that you can select a piece of information in the form of a file – an image, a spreadsheet document etc., and put it into a format that will enable easy transmission. This could involve compression of a large file, or even splitting the file in two using special software. You should then use a number of different file transmission methods (eg FTP, e-mail etc.). Secondly there is the exchange of real-time information using such methods as VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol), virtual meeting software, live chat using video and sound. You should show your assessor that you are able to choose the appropriate method as well as to configure and adjust the software to give optimum quality of sound and vision.

Due to the security implications of some of the latter activities, there may be difficulties in persuading your employer or qualification provider to allow you to use certain software and data transmission methods. This is understandable, since the potential for serious damage to a system through misuse of software or intrusion from outside, through the software, can be extremely high. However, with the use of properly configured software protected by a firewall and anti-virus software should not pose a significant threat. For instance, when using instant messaging software (NOT chat rooms), a controlled remote link can be set up between two or three known people, and all others excluded. Files can then be transmitted using that link, and it is possible to use web cams too. You should first discuss this with your assessor who will then make the necessary arrangements.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

The knowledge requirements really speak for themselves– many of the requirements can be met in the course of completing the practical assessment tasks. A little thought will allow you to combine even more of the knowledge with the practical tasks. How about, for instance, doing a search for laws and guidelines applicable to the use of IT? A discussion of your search results with your assessor would produce some very useful knowledge and practical evidence, and would deal with a rather dry, but necessary subject in a slightly more interesting way.

### **Summary**

To successfully complete this unit you need to demonstrate a practical ability to make full use of Internet technology for the purpose for which it was originally intended – the finding, evaluation and sharing of information for the common good. This should be backed up with knowledge of issues affecting the use of the technology, such as security, legislation and software features.

# E-MAIL LEVEL 1

## Unit 1H

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

Most of us use the basic e-mail as a quick, simple way of sending text and maybe a small photo or a file to someone. It is these basic skills that you will be assessed on in this unit. You will need to demonstrate that you can compose e-mails, add attachments, send them, receive them and manage them in a simple directory system. You also need to show that you are aware of the problems (viruses, transmission difficulties, etc) that can occur when you are using e-mail.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

First of all you need to set up and organise your e-mail software so that you can send a plain text e-mail to someone. You will need to have some e-mail contacts, held in an address book, and a standard e-mail software application. This should be set up with at least one e-mail account and the facilities to connect to the Internet. These are the basic tools that you will use to show your skill in using the basic e-mail facilities.

Now here is some advice about the **kind of task** that might be suitable for this unit. First of all, a few words typed into an e-mail message and sent to one person will not be sufficient for one task. This unit is about your ability to use e-mail for a useful purpose, so first of all, the contents must be meaningful. You might be at work and be asked to send someone some information. You could be using e-mail at home to help with the organisation of a club or community event. The e-mails you send and receive should have a clear purpose and usefulness, but need not necessarily be on the same subject. Each message should contain useful, clearly worded information (half an A4 page is a reasonable size). You will need to show that you can attach a file to a message and also to open and manage **attachments** to messages that you receive.

Although the basic requirement is for you to carry out two straightforward but different tasks, if you look closely at all the skills and techniques you need to demonstrate, you are very unlikely to cover them all in just two jobs. But of course you will be using e-mail on a regular basis, so you will have plenty of chance to satisfy the rest of the requirements. You should remember that, even though you are demonstrating only one of the techniques, you should do so as part of a useful task as described above, and not on its own with no clear reason. As you can see, you need to demonstrate **forwarding, replying to one or more people, and replying with history**- that means including every e-mail on the subject as part of your reply. It is simple to do – you just don't delete anything, and then people can see the thread of information and can understand what has gone on before.

It is worth mentioning something about 'netiquette' - the special rules of politeness and acceptable behaviour when using the Internet to communicate. You have to remember that when you are talking to someone face-to face or even on the phone, you say more with your body and the tone of your voice than the actual words do. Remember that the only thing a person has to go by is the actual words printed on the screen, and those words on their own can sometimes be rude or intimidating. You will find that you will communicate much better by keeping to the rules, and good communication is what this unit is about. Your assessor will particularly be looking for evidence that you understand this and are keeping to the rules.

Sending and receiving all these e-mails and all of this information means that you will have to **organise** it in some way. And so you will be expected to have a simple system for storing messages and information in a logical way, so that you can find things easily when you need to. Of course, you also need to remember the addresses of all the people you have e-mail communication with, so you must also show that you can open and maintain an **e-mail address book**.

The **exchanging information** part should be done using **e-mail - in** other words, logging on to an FTP site and uploading files is not acceptable. What you can do however, is to use web based mail in the same way as your PC based e-mail software, if you are comfortable with that.. You can send attachments (but be careful to stay within the size limits for the site), organise messages into folders, and compose and receive messages and attachments in the usual way. So your second task could be done using web mail, while satisfying many of the requirements of **sending and receiving**.

Web mail is one type of interactive site - another is an electronic portfolio facility, often based on the Internet or intranet. This is ideal for demonstrating **exchange of information, sending and receiving**, etc. while building your portfolio and getting it assessed.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

The knowledge requirement is self-explanatory and should be demonstrated either during the practical tasks or during directed discussion with your assessor. You may need to do some research to find out what you need to know about problems you might experience when using e-mail, and the law governing its use. Your e-mail system at work is likely to be well protected and most of the legal issues taken care of by the network manager, but these things still apply to you wherever you use e-mail, and you need to be aware of them so that you too can be a responsible user of the system.

### **Summary**

The unit deals with one of the communication tools that is becoming almost universally used, and is rapidly being taken for granted. The successful completion of this unit will identify you as someone who can not only operate a computer system to send and receive e-mail, but as someone who understands the potential problems and the legal implications of what they are doing. You will be identified as a responsible e-mail user.

## E-MAIL LEVEL 2

### Unit 2H

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

Most of us use the basic e-mail as a quick, simple way of sending text and maybe a small photo to someone. But there are many features and facilities that make e-mail a powerful tool, but which many of us never use. This unit requires you to demonstrate knowledge of and skill in using some of those features so that you can communicate better and more securely both in the workplace and at home.

First of all you need to set up and organise your e-mail software so that you can do more than just send a plain text e-mail to one person. You will need groups of e-mail contacts, to set up and use software for compressing files such as photographs, and to use features such as standard signatures, auto replies, etc. This will satisfy some of the **Using address books and other facilities** requirements. You should also show that you can set up e-mails of different designs and use different **formats** such as HTML, Rich Text Format, etc.

To bring all that together into an assessable task, one option might be to organise a number of recipients into a group and send them a short newsletter in HTML format, including a photograph as an attachment in compressed format.

The **sending and receiving** part of the unit will involve you using a number of different facilities that you may not be able to combine into one task. However, you could use a common theme, have one overall goal and do all your assessment activities within it. You will need to show also that you can organise and administer e-mail messages, put them into appropriate folders, archive them, prioritise outgoing messages, etc. In other words you will be using the e-mail software as a useful work tool to improve your work efficiency.

The **exchanging information** requirement should be demonstrated in the context of **e-mail** in other words, logging on to an FTP site and uploading files does not demonstrate the use of e-mail to exchange information. What you can do, however, is to use web based mail in the same way as your PC based e-mail software. You can send attachments (which may need to be compressed because of strict size limits), organise messages into folders, and compose and receive messages and attachments in the usual way. So your second task could be accomplished using web mail, while satisfying many of the requirements of **sending and receiving**.

Web mail is one type of interactive site - another is an electronic portfolio facility, often based on the Internet or intranet. This is ideal for demonstrating **exchange of information, sending and receiving**, etc, while building your portfolio and getting it assessed.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

The knowledge requirement is self-explanatory and should be demonstrated either during the practical tasks or during directed discussion with your assessor. You may need to do some research to find out what you need to know about problems you might experience when using e-mail, and the law governing its use. Your e-mail system at work is likely to be well protected and most of the legal issues taken care of by the network manager, but these things still apply to you wherever you use e-mail, and you need to be aware of them so that you too can be a responsible user of the system.

## **Summary**

The unit deals with one of the communication tools that is becoming almost universally used, and is rapidly being taken for granted. The successful completion of this unit will identify you as someone who can not only operate a computer system to send and receive e-mail, but as someone who understands the potential problems and the legal implications of what they are doing. You will be identified as a responsible e-mail user.

## **FAQ**

What is meant by compressing an e-mail?

*The word 'attachments' should be included in this criterion – it is the attachment and not the e-mail that should be compressed before sending.*

## E-MAIL LEVEL 3

### Unit 3H

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

To be successful in this unit, you need to be able to use e-mail to its fullest extent. That means using some of the more advanced features that many people don't bother with. These features, encryption, filtering, etc, are becoming more important as the problems of SPAM, e-mail viruses and general Internet security increase. As an e-mail user, particularly when you compose and send

e-mail, you have a responsibility to make sure that the messages and attachments that you send are safe for any recipient to have on their system. There is particular emphasis here on those extra features, as well as on the more basic techniques of composing, formatting and sending e-mail for the purpose of exchanging information.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

**Sending and receiving** e-mail can be a time consuming occupation when it forms a large part of your job. You might send and receive two or three hundred e-mails on different subjects during the course of a day, and you need to be able to organise them in some way. Also, the chances are that some of the messages are SPAM and you need to identify and filter them out. All of this can be done by having sets of 'rules' for sorting and re-directing e-mail as it comes in, so that you can prioritise your work. You might start with a simple inbox, create a series of sub-folders and then use the software tools in your e-mail client to set up the rules. Although this might be tedious if there is a lot to do, the end result will be a much more user-friendly e-mail set-up that will save you time and frustration. Additionally, you will have satisfied an important part of the unit.

**Using address books and other facilities** should include not only simply listing contacts, but arranging them into contact groups and different lists, and including much more information in the contact file such as addresses, contact numbers and other information. You should also show that you can set up multiple e-mail accounts and use facilities such as encryption, electronic signatures and performance enhancing settings such as automatic downloading, automatic sending, etc.

**Formatting e-mails** to make them easier to read and more efficient to send means that you should make a conscious decision on what format to use. Should you send a message in plain text, or do you want to enhance the text using italics or bold (RTF), or do you want to include a photograph or an animated banner (HTML)? Is that large word-processed document suitable to e-mail, do you want people to be able to alter it, or would it be better to send it in .PDF format with a password? The tasks that you use for your assessment should include these issues and should require you to make at least some of the decisions outlined above. **Exchanging information** at this level really amounts to the same process – getting the whole information package into the best format for transmission, so that it arrives at the desired destination in the correct format, having been transmitted in the most efficient and secure way. Of course e-mail isn't a 'real-time' medium, and so live chat sessions, virtual meetings, etc, are not appropriate, however, you should still be able to demonstrate a range of different file transfer formats and methods.

**An example** of a typical e-mail task at this level might be found in the kind of advertising e-mail often sent out by commercial organisations such as computer spares retailers, record companies and other on-line retailers. They contain coloured adverts with photographs, animated banners and other eye catching features. These are sent out to groups of recipients (customers) and the content is often targeted to individual groups. So here you have an e-mail message with substantial content to be sent to multiple recipients for a specific and useful purpose. You could do the same with a company newsletter or e-zine and maybe encrypt it so that only the intended recipients can read it. Where you have substantial content, you might consider composing the body of the e-mail using a word processor, in which case you might use it as evidence for a Word processing software unit as well. You might also explore the use of web-based e-mail and make use of that in a similar way.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

The knowledge requirement is self-explanatory and should be demonstrated either during the practical tasks or during directed discussion with your assessor. You may need to do some research to find out what you need to know about problems you might experience when using e-mail, and the law governing its use. You will need to know how ISPs work and be able to tell whether a problem is related to your system or theirs – connection or mail server failure, for instance. Your e-mail system at work is likely to be well protected and most of the legal issues taken care of by the network manager, but these things still apply to you wherever you use e-mail, and you need to be aware of them so that you too can be a responsible user of the system. You will also be asked to make judgements on what other people around you need to know about the laws and guidelines relating to e-mail, and you will need to show that you are able to pass on that information to them

### **Summary**

The unit deals with one of the communication tools that is becoming almost universally used, and is rapidly being taken for granted. The successful completion of this unit will identify you as someone who can operate a computer system to send and receive e-mail in a secure and efficient way. It will also identify you as someone who understands the potential problems and the legal implications of what they are doing. You will be identified as a responsible e-mail user.

# WORD PROCESSING SOFTWARE LEVEL 1

## Unit 11

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit asks you to demonstrate your ability to use **word processing** software to produce **appropriate simple** documents. What does this actually mean? Well, using a word processing application can be a daunting prospect for a relative beginner, modern software has a lot of functions and facilities that were unheard of even five years ago. The good news is that you won't be expected to know how to use the more complicated ones. What you will be expected to do, however, is to produce **simple** documents, like letters, memos, short reports, etc. that are well laid out, easy to read, and, what is most important, communicate information to an 'audience' in a professional way.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

First of all, you must be able to show that you can **handle files** – create a new one, open an existing one, save one as something else, and print. These are very basic operations, without which a word processor would be useless. You are certain to be doing them every day, almost without thinking. But you must also demonstrate that you can do these things without damaging or disrupting the system you are working on.

The starting point for each of the tasks is to understand what you need to produce at the end, and you should be very clear about that from the start. You will need to **choose carefully** the tasks that will be used for your assessment. It is no good choosing a standard two-line letter– you will not use most of the features and techniques required for this unit, so you will end up doing far more tasks than you need to in order to complete it. The unit requirements indicate the kind of skills that you need to use during the task – you probably won't use all of them. That's fine; you can try and choose another task that needs some of the other skills next time. If you then look at the two tasks together, you will have demonstrated quite a range of skills and techniques. If the type of work you usually do is always the same and doesn't use some of the main skills, then your assessor may arrange some additional work to cover them.

You might normally use templates to produce your work – that will satisfy part of the **laying out** skills, but you can't satisfy the rest of the skills requirements just by using **templates**. Most of your work should be done starting from a blank sheet, although you could use an existing example to guide you. You have to show that you can set up a basic document yourself, **setting fonts, paragraphs, lines and page** characteristics to suit the document you have been asked to produce. You also need to create simple tables and enter data into them.

Having put the words on the paper, you will need to show that you can use various editing techniques – although a better task to show that might be to edit an existing document, maybe insert a paragraph, change dates, recipients and other details. Lastly, when you have finished, so that the document has a professional look, you should proof read, spell check and grammar check the text, making any changes you might need.

It is a good idea to take a copy of your document at various key stages, to show how it was produced, maybe doing a 'save as' or a screen shot. This should make it easier for your assessor to see that you know what you are doing. This process should not take very long and you should not allow it to disrupt the main task – producing a professional looking document.

**How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

Although most of the knowledge requirements will be satisfied within the two straightforward tasks, your assessor might want to expand on that evidence using questions or a discussion. You will need to have a good grasp of the basic principles of the different types of paper communication – business letters, marketing mail shots, etc – how they might be laid out and worded. You will also need to be able to decide on appropriate layouts and styles for some of the more usual types of audience.

**Summary**

Following the guidelines above, you should be able to choose two suitable tasks, combine them with one or two screen shots and maybe an observation, and provide most of the evidence for the unit. The emphasis must be on what these tasks are really about - to use the word processor to communicate a given piece of information to a given audience in the most appropriate and effective way.

# WORD PROCESSING SOFTWARE LEVEL 2

## Unit 2I

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

In this unit you must demonstrate that you are capable of producing a professional looking document, using a word processor, which communicates some given information in the most appropriate way. If your organisation has a set of standard templates – many do to save time and to maintain a ‘house style’ – you will be expected, at Level 2, to select the most appropriate template to use. You would normally be given some sort of handwritten notes or draft narrative, along with an idea of the document’s purpose and a list of the recipients. If your organisation uses mail merge, then it would be appropriate to include that as part of one of the tasks.

You will need to choose carefully the tasks that will be used for your assessment. It is no good choosing a standard two-line letter to one recipient – you will not use most of the features and techniques required for this unit, so you will end up doing far more tasks than you need to in order to complete it. Discuss with your assessor the most appropriate tasks to use – remember, this is about your ability to use a word processor in an effective way to communicate information.

**Handling files** is a standard procedure that you will use on a regular and frequent basis throughout this qualification – make sure that files are in the right place, you open the right file to work on, and when you save your work, you save it in the right place. When you have the document open, you need to demonstrate that you can enter and **edit text** in various ways, and that you can import and **combine** a variety of different types of information, such as a spreadsheet chart or a photograph. Next, you need to show that you can format text in a range of different ways – perhaps in columns, different paragraph styles and with headers and footers. There are many features that you may not use in combination, but that you really need to show that you can use. So the advice when choosing your assessment tasks is this:

- Choose a task that includes a good variety of skills and techniques, but don’t worry if you cannot cover them all
- If you use additional skills and techniques on an occasional basis (like columns and photographs when you edit the monthly newsletter) then you can include one of those as well
- Take every opportunity to save an example of a rarely used skill, but do not over-collect evidence
- Take screen shots of the various stages of your main assessment tasks to illustrate the techniques that might otherwise be hidden
- If you are about to use a rarely-used technique in a routine task, and there is a member of the assessing staff available, ask to be observed using that technique and make sure it is properly recorded.

A typical task might look like this (see how many unit requirements this would satisfy):

Please note, this is merely an example of how it **might** be done.

One of your duties is to produce, each month, a company newsletter. It is printed in newspaper style with photographs and advertisements interspersed. You are given drafts of the articles and the advertisements, electronic copies of the photographs and a draft layout.

Here is a possible work sequence:

- start by typing in the words and importing the photographs
- sort out the advertisements and import them too
- alter some of the styling and change the layout so that it all looks symmetrical and uncluttered
- you might then produce the newsletter in a couple of different layouts and styles, changing the whole look of the document
- the two versions could then go to the editor for a final decision

You may have a number of readers who are sight-impaired, and you could produce a version with large print and a slightly different layout. Finally, you proofread the text, correct any errors you find, and ensure the paragraphs, pages, headers, footers, etc, look right and that the whole document looks professional.

You might even personalise the newsletters and do a mail merge to finish the task.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

Although most of the knowledge requirements will be satisfied within the two substantial tasks, your assessor might want to expand on that evidence using questions or a discussion. You will need to have a good grasp of the basic principles of the different types of paper communication – business letters, marketing mail shots, etc – how they might be laid out and worded.

You will also need to be able to decide on appropriate layouts and styles for some of the more usual types of audience.

### **Summary**

The above is a typical example of a realistic task that you might be faced with as a user of word processing software. It covers all of the main requirements for the unit, including evaluating your audience and formatting your work accordingly. Done properly, with one or two screen shots and maybe an observation, the task will provide substantial evidence for the unit. The emphasis must be on what tasks are really about - to use the word processor to communicate a particular selection of information to a given audience in the most appropriate and effective way.

### **FAQ**

What examples could I use to link information within the same type of software?

*Bookmarks, hyperlinks*

# WORD PROCESSING SOFTWARE LEVEL 3

## Unit 3I

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

In this unit you must demonstrate that you are capable of producing professional looking documents, using a word processor, which communicates some given information in the most appropriate way. The documents must be complex and should contain information in different forms and from different sources. You might, for instance, include a spreadsheet chart, some photographs or drawings, and a passage of text imported from another document. The document should be something like a detailed report, perhaps a technical specification for a complex piece of machinery, or maybe a planning document for an event or complex project. Clearly you will not be expected to compose the content yourself, but you should have considerable choice in the layout and presentation style. You may well have to follow a 'house style', but there is generally some flexibility within those rules.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

**Handling files** is a standard procedure that you will use on a regular and frequent basis throughout this qualification – make sure that files are in the right place, you open the right file to work on, and when you save your work, you save it in the right place. You should also demonstrate that you can **convert file formats** in a safe and appropriate way to suit the document you are producing and the other uses to which it will be put. When you have the document open, you need to demonstrate that you can enter and **edit text** in various ways, and that you can import and **combine** a variety of different types of information, such as spreadsheets chart or photographs. You will need to **link** objects and use hyperlinks to aid navigation. You will also need to embed objects in the text. In the process of doing this you should incorporate links to other types of software, such as a web browser (with a hyperlink to a website) and a spreadsheet (with a link to a piece of data).

Next you need to show that you can format text in a range of different ways – perhaps in columns, different paragraph styles and with headers and footers. There are many features that you may not use in combination, but that you really need to show that you can use. So the advice when choosing your assessment tasks is this:

- Choose a really substantial task that includes a good variety of skills and techniques, but don't worry if you can't cover them all. Remember that this unit is about producing something that communicates a complex collection of information in a professional way, using a wide range of advanced techniques.
- If you use additional skills and techniques on an occasional basis (like columns and photographs when you edit the monthly newsletter) then you can include one of those as well.
- Take every opportunity to save an example of a rarely used skill, but do not over-collect evidence.
- Take screen shots of the various stages of your main assessment tasks to illustrate the techniques that might otherwise be hidden.
- If you are about to use a rarely-used technique in a routine task, and there is a member of the assessing staff available, ask to be observed using that technique and make sure it is properly recorded.
- If the task is not specific on some of the presentation formats, consider offering one or two alternative versions using different formats. That way you will cover a little more of the unit requirements and you will give the project owner an opportunity to select the most appropriate version.



**How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

Although most of the knowledge requirements will be satisfied within the three complex tasks, your assessor might want to expand on that evidence using questions or a discussion. You will need to have a good grasp of the principles of a wide range of types of paper communication – business letters, marketing mail shots, reports, technical specifications, etc – and how they should be laid out and worded. You will also need to be able to decide on appropriate layouts and styles for a broad range of audience types.

**Summary**

This unit asks you to demonstrate skill in producing complex professional documents that will often be read and used at a high level in an organisation. You will often be more knowledgeable and adept at laying out these documents than their author, who may rely heavily on your skills to produce a high quality end product. In successfully completing this unit you will show that you can take on that responsibility and contribute a great deal to the success of a particular project.

# SPREADSHEET SOFTWARE LEVEL 1

## Unit 1J

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

Modern spreadsheet software is very powerful and has a wide range of sometimes quite complicated features. But it is still basically software that is used to produce spreadsheets. This unit asks you to demonstrate your skill in the use of the basic features of spreadsheet software and you should not be concerned with using features such as macros or complex filters. If you find that you use the same spreadsheet features day after day, and they don't cover the unit requirements then you need to talk to your assessor about tasks that can be used to complete the coverage. The unit is about your ability to take a set of data, create a spreadsheet with it and then to analyse and present the data in a particular way.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

First of all you need to have a clear understanding of what you have been asked to do in the task, and what the final result should look like. Clearly, before you can do anything, you have to **create** and/or **open** a file in which to do your work. You will also need to demonstrate, at some stage, other basic techniques of **handling files**. You can now **enter the data** into the cells of the spreadsheet document. You must show that you can do this accurately, and you need to demonstrate that you are **checking** the data input against the data you have been given. If you don't do that, then what you do in the rest of the task will be of little use. You will also need to show that you can **edit the data** accurately at some stage. Along with this, you should show that you can **insert, size** and **position** information into the spreadsheet. This could be a picture, a graph to use for comparison, or simply a company logo. The techniques required for this are basic and should not involve advanced techniques such as animation, macros, etc.

Once the data is in correctly, you can **format the spreadsheet** and the **cells** within it. This will involve using basic tools and techniques to get the document looking how you want it, and doing what you want it to do. As part of this process, you should also be required to use simple formulas such as sum, operators and fractions. You will not be expected to use more complicated formulas such as those used for statistics or financial analysis. Any analysis you do on the data should be relatively simple – for instance, sub-totals, sorting a cell range or find.

When **presenting the spreadsheet**, charts should be simple and not involve any animation or data linking, but you should cover a good range of chart types during your tasks. One way of covering more chart types might be to produce more than one type of chart for each spreadsheet – it shouldn't take too long – and you could make suggestions as to which of them is most suited to the data and the people who will be using the chart.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

The knowledge required for this unit is fairly limited and mainly concentrates on what the data is to be used for, how it will be used and who will use it. You will show your knowledge of how to produce accurate, well laid out spreadsheets by actually doing it, but your assessor might want to extend that by asking you to describe what you might do in other circumstances. Similarly, you might be asked about some of the simple analysis tools and techniques that you didn't have the chance to demonstrate in the tasks.

**Summary**

Successful completion of this unit will show that you are able to complete a spreadsheet task by choosing from a selection of simple techniques and features, using them to enter, sort and analyse a given set of data, and present results in a format that suits a given audience.

## SPREADSHEET SOFTWARE LEVEL 2

### Unit 2J

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

The use of spreadsheets, as opposed to other data handling software, is governed largely by what type of data you work with, what you need to do with it and how you need to display the results. The tasks that you use for assessment in this unit must be valid uses of spreadsheets. They should not, for instance, consist of large amounts of tabulated data that requires no sorting, analysis or display, and that could just as easily be presented using a table in a word processing document.

The first requirement for **handling files** covers the normal process of opening, closing, organising, moving, copying, etc. These are standard techniques and should be demonstrated naturally during the course of the tasks.

When choosing tasks for assessment, you should look carefully at the skills and techniques requirements and decide which of them you use on a daily basis in your work with spreadsheets. Many people tend to use a fairly fixed range of features in a software package because their work is all of a similar type. You need to decide if one of these standard tasks covers enough of the requirements for the unit. If so, then two normal tasks backed up by discussions and/or questioning will be sufficient, however, the two tasks must be **substantially different** and not simply the same task using different data.

What happens if you only do one type of task? Well, how about taking one of the tasks and presenting it in an entirely different way? Change the cell colouring, the fonts, chart types, put in different headers and footers, and add explanatory text or some graphics. In doing this, you will clearly demonstrate the use of a **range** of techniques and features, and you might even have one of them adopted as a new company standard. The above should cover **entering and editing data, formatting and presenting spreadsheets**.

**Combining information** could prove a challenge if none of the spreadsheets you produce can sensibly be linked. But why not try splitting the spreadsheet into two or three logical parts and entering them in separate worksheets, or even separate work books? These can then be linked. For instance, a year's worth of data could be split into quarters. The other part of the requirement can be satisfied quite easily by importing or adding something to the basic spreadsheet, however, additions to your work should **not** be done just for the sake of satisfying the requirement to combine 'something with something else'. The additions should be appropriate, relevant and add to the value of the original document.

The use of **functions and formulas** can be demonstrated during the setting up of the spreadsheet, by using standard ones in the most appropriate way to achieve the desired result. This, of course, can also be used to demonstrate the use of absolute and relative cell references. The **analysis and interpretation** of spreadsheet data can be demonstrated using any spreadsheet, not necessarily the one produced above. For instance, your supervisor may require the answers to certain questions regarding the data in a spreadsheet, and may also require the filtering and extraction of certain specific data. Remember, the aim is to demonstrate that you can *accurately extract and manipulate* the data, not just that you can use the techniques.

**How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

Your knowledge of the use of spreadsheets to communicate information to a wide range of audiences is probably best demonstrated during discussions with your assessor. Most people use spreadsheets in a quite limited way, but the range of possible uses is much larger than you might think. It would be useful to do some research into the subject, maybe as part of the Internet and intranets unit. This may, for instance, produce ideas for new spreadsheet applications at work, making more efficient use of existing software. The important thing is that you get the right format with the right data for a particular audience.

**Summary**

Successful completion of this unit will show that you are able to complete a spreadsheet task by choosing from a selection of techniques and features, using them to enter, sort and analyse a given set of data, and present results in a format that suits a given audience.

**FAQ**

What example could I use to link information within the same type of software?

*Hyperlinks*

# SPREADSHEET SOFTWARE LEVEL 3

## Unit 3J

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

To be successful in this unit, you will need to be skilled in using a wide range of the tools and features available in the modern spreadsheet applications, including the more advanced and complex ones. The tasks you will use to demonstrate this should be quite large and require a good deal of thought and expertise, not only to enter and order the data, but to solve complex problems such as financial or statistical analysis, or to validate sets of data. This should not merely be adding up columns of figures or multiplying the contents of two or three cells together. It should involve the use of advanced functions and formulas in a technically complex spreadsheet.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

As with any other type of software application, **handling files** is an important technique. Here you should not only show that you can organise files, find them, open, close and save them, but also convert them to other formats *where appropriate and necessary*. For instance, a manager might want you to produce a financial and then convert it for use as a presentation, web page or in some other transmission medium.

One of the features that make modern software applications so powerful is the ability to import, export, combine and link information from different of document. You might have a set of financial data that is made up of different sub-sets of data originating in different departments, often in different parts of the world. You should choose your tasks so that you can demonstrate your ability not only to link and embed objects and data, but to **combine information** from a number of different sources, and versions.

Having gathered, entered and manipulated the data, you should show that you can make judgements about the data that you have analysed and validated. You need to be sure that the results and conclusions indicated by the calculations you have done are relevant and accurate. There may be times when you need to reject certain results. This will be useful evidence for the unit, because not every job goes right every time, and you will need to show that you can recognise when there is a problem. This should be the subject of a guided discussion with your assessor, where you can discuss the various criteria for rejecting data or results, and the action you could take to resolve the problem. This will all form part of the requirements for **analysing and interpreting spreadsheets** and **checking spreadsheets**.

What happens if you only do one type of task at work? Well, how about taking one of the tasks and presenting it in an entirely different way? Change the cell colouring, the fonts, chart types, put in different headers and footers, and add explanatory text or some graphics. In doing this, you will clearly demonstrate the use of a **range** of techniques and features, and you might even have one of them adopted as a new company standard. Remember, though, this should be done using **complex** data – a simple spreadsheet will not do. The above should cover **entering and editing data, formatting and presenting spreadsheets**. In doing this also, you should show that you can use security features such as hiding and protecting cells, that you can work with shared workbooks, and that you can use a much wider range of cell, workbook and report **formats**.

Lastly, you need to show that you can use a wide range of customising tools such as for menus and views, and also time saving automation such as shortcuts and macros. These should be incorporated as part of the task where possible, as should all of the other skills. It is **not** sufficient to demonstrate a series of isolated skills. Having chosen the right task, you should have plenty of opportunity to demonstrate a good range of skills while you are completing it. Remember, you have to do a minimum of three tasks, and you should spread the range of skills over all three.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

At this level you will be involved in the production of creation and presentation of quite complex spreadsheets and to do that you need to have a good grasp of how to get information across to different audiences. An example might be a company's annual financial report, where it might be appropriate to have different versions (in terms of presentation only!) for the Board, the shareholders and the staff. The presentation styles would reflect the different levels of understanding, viewpoints and interests of the various audiences. Spreadsheet applications are tools to aid you in doing a professional job. You may not use all the features, but you will need to show your assessor that you have a good understanding of most of the advanced features and techniques available to you, particularly where the **analysis and interpretation** of data is concerned.

### **Summary**

The chances are that you will be one of the most proficient users of spreadsheet software in your organisation, and you may have considerable responsibility for producing reports for use outside your department. Successful completion of this unit will show that you are able to take on that responsibility, presenting complex spreadsheet data in a professional way, and to a variety of different audiences.

# DATABASE SOFTWARE LEVEL 1

## Unit 1K

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

The work required to successfully complete this unit will all be done on an existing, well-established database. At Level 1, the type of work that you are likely to be allowed to do on the database is quite limited, and will probably be confined to entry, checking and retrieval of data, followed by some simple queries and reports. The reason for this is likely to be that the data involved is extremely valuable and the access to it needs to be restricted so that there is less chance of it being lost or corrupted. The skills and knowledge you will be required to demonstrate in this unit reflect that situation.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

The most likely scenario for your tasks is that you will be asked to access one or more database files, enter new data into them and then produce new reports from the revised database. You should show that you can work with the database fields, adjusting them or the data so that entries are accepted, and then saving the amended files. You should also show that you are checking the data both manually and using simple on-line tools, and then you should use tools such as single criteria filter and 'sort'. You will be asked to use a particular report format using pre-defined criteria. There is no requirement at this level to design a report format.

You should be able to demonstrate all of these skills and techniques while working with your database, with very little additional tasking from your assessor, however, your assessor will be looking especially for accurate and secure data entry – without that, a database becomes useless. In addition, you should be careful to use exactly the query criteria you have been asked to use, and the report format should also be precisely what is asked for.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

Since you are using what is likely to be a large and quite sophisticated software application, you should at least have a good knowledge of what the database is designed for and the type of data held in it. This can be demonstrated during discussions with your assessor.

#### Summary

The successful completion of this unit will demonstrate your ability to use a database of the type in general use in a vast majority of organisations. It will also demonstrate your knowledge of the purpose of the database, and will show that you are able to handle valuable data safely and responsibly.

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# DATABASE SOFTWARE LEVEL 2

## Unit 2K

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

In this unit, you will not be required to actually design a database; you will, however, need to know something of how they are designed and how they work (knowledge component: **database design**). This knowledge is crucial to your success in the unit, and, if you have a good grasp of the basics, you will find it much easier to use the database in a real situation.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

The skills and techniques requirements are quite self-explanatory, but there may be some instances where you don't actually do something at work, simply because it isn't your job. There may be an easy solution, so let's first of all look at what a database actually is. Well, to start with, quite obviously, it is a collection of data, but that data needs to have certain characteristics:

- it must not be constantly changing, otherwise doing any kind of sorting and analysing would be impossible.
- it must be held in some kind of structure, so that individual entries can be found and accessed easily

Similar databases are often linked together, but data is quite often held in one large file with large numbers of records in identical sets of fields. These are often termed 'single-table, non-relational', another name for a simple spreadsheet.

You must be clear on the differences between databases and spreadsheets – you should discuss with your assessor the instances where you might be able to use a spreadsheet to demonstrate a particular skill or technique.

The unit covers the whole range of tasks you may be involved in when administering and using a database at Level 2. Since databases usually contain valuable and sensitive information, you may have to make some special arrangements to demonstrate some of the skills and techniques, particularly the ones involving **modifying the database** and **formatting the data**. This could involve using a copy of the database, which can then be deleted at the end without affecting the live data. Other requirements such as **entering** and **checking data**, and doing **queries** and **reports** should be quite straightforward. One quite efficient method of producing evidence could be to start with a series of raw data, enter it into the database, possibly modifying field characteristics in the process, and then designing queries and reports to demonstrate that the data is actually in the database in the correct place.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

Apart from the knowledge of **database design**, it is essential that you know and understand the issues surrounding **data integrity** – a fundamental principle in the use of databases. You will already have been taught the essentials, but it is important to demonstrate a clear understanding of them in discussion with your assessor. The remaining requirement – **Field characteristics** - should be clearly demonstrated during your work-based tasks.

#### Summary

The successful completion of this unit will demonstrate your ability to use and administer a database of the type in general use in a vast majority of organisations. It will also demonstrate your grasp of the essentials of database design and the legal requirements surrounding the data held in such systems. This knowledge and ability is essential in a world where the effective use of personal and commercial data is the key to the success of an organisation.

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## DATABASE SOFTWARE LEVEL 3

### Unit 3K

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

In this unit, you will not be required to actually design a database; you will, however, need to know something of how they are designed and how they work (knowledge component: **database design**). You will also be expected to modify the characteristics of fields and to make arrangements for the input and retrieval of data by designing data queries, data entry forms, etc. Above all, there is one thing that you must show that you take into consideration every time you work with a database, and that is **data integrity**. At this level, because you are able to change some of the ways that the database works, you might also be able, inadvertently, to damage the data. You must avoid that – data being the most valuable part of any system.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

First of all, you must be in a position where you have the authority to perform the operations required in this unit. Often, database users will have very restricted access to the data and data fields. If this is the case then the unit can be assessed in part or entirely in a realistic working environment, with the work tasks being as realistic as possible. You will be working largely with multi-table databases and will probably be dealing with data from a number of different sources.

In addition to the standard database data entry technique, you need to show that you can **create and implement forms for data entry** and that you can import data from other sources. You might have a requirement to input a new type of data or additional data using existing forms as a basis. You will need to show that you have considered the factors of time (to input and extract data) and data integrity, and that any imported data set is in the correct format for the fields into which it is being placed.

You need to show that you can assess the requirements for a particular report or query and modify your methods in order to meet them. You should be able to create styles for all the database features such as fields, tables and reports.

A scenario for a suitable task might be that you are asked to prepare an existing database for the input of a completely new set of data. You will need to **create forms** so that users can input the data more efficiently and you will need to modify the field characteristics to suit the new data. You will also need to change or establish **data file relationships** so that required data can be retrieved. Taking a set of data output requirements such as current stock levels, number of customers living in a particular area and so on, create a set of standard queries for the users to select from, with maybe a set of additional queries and report formats for management use. You might produce a series of macros to automate some of the processes, and you could also customise some of the menus for this particular task, all with a view to **improving efficiency**.

Each task must be a comprehensive one. It should have a definite objective and should not merely demonstrate a series of isolated skills.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

At this level you should be able to demonstrate a good understanding not only of how a database works, including the advanced user features, but of why things are done in a particular way and the implications of modification and data manipulation. High on this list should be data integrity – you are likely to be in a position to affect data integrity by the work that you do, and you should discuss the implications with your assessor. You should also discuss the features of multi-table database design listed in **Database design** and **Field characteristics**, using practical demonstration where necessary.

### **Summary**

You are likely to be dealing with a substantial commercial database, and as such are working with a large proportion of your organisation's assets. That carries some responsibility to make sure that data is entered and manipulated accurately and safely, and that data integrity is preserved. In working on this unit you should always demonstrate that you understand and practice those principles and that you are able to do much more than simply enter data and produce simple reports.

# WEBSITE SOFTWARE LEVEL 1

## Unit 1L

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

In this unit you will be asked to show your ability to use website software to produce simple websites, generally consisting of one page containing text and a graphic (for instance, a photograph or a .gif image). You will need to demonstrate a number of skills and techniques to complete the unit and this should be done as part of a task that results in the production of a web page. It is not acceptable to demonstrate these techniques on separate occasions for separate tasks.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

You should start with a clearly defined task, in other words you must understand exactly what it is that you have been asked to produce, and you should first of all produce a brief description of the final product. This should be a **simple layout** showing where the text and graphic(s) should be. It is much easier to change things at this stage if they look wrong.

Now you can start using the software, beginning with some **file handling**. You could create the page in a word processor and transfer it to a web page template, or you could use software designed to create web pages direct from the input text and graphics. You might want to use an **existing file** or you may have to **create** a new one – you should use both during your assessment. The easiest way to do that is to take a break in your work, save the file and close it and then open it again when you resume. The rest of the requirements will be covered when you print the page out and save the file to a folder that you might have created.

To produce the website itself, you will obviously have to use **editing, formatting and laying out** techniques. You should have to use all of the basic ones anyway, including inserting and **aligning images** and perhaps some basic navigation, but you should be ready to talk your assessor through the process and explain how and why you used those techniques.

Having entered the text and image(s), you should then **check** it using the basic spell and grammar check tools and you should also make sure that each image is correctly positioned and is of a suitable file format. .gif .bmp and .jpg are common ones but you might use others. You should confirm details with your supervisor or assessor.

The last part of the process is to **upload the file** onto a web page template so that it can then be put onto a server. You will not be expected to upload to a server to complete this unit.

You have now completed one of the two tasks required for this unit. The next one should be different and, if possible, you should use some of the basic techniques you were unable to use in the first one.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

Most of the knowledge requirement will probably be covered during the assessment tasks, but there are certain points that can really only be covered by questioning or in discussion with your assessor. In particular you should be able to discuss the different audiences that websites might be aimed at – perhaps children or visually impaired, or people who may not understand fully the language used on the site. You should be able to suggest special features that could be included to help them make better use of the site, and to discuss the standard features, such as hyperlinks, hot spots etc. and when they might be used.

Lastly, because websites are generally (but not always) available for the public to see and use, you must show that you are aware of and understand the laws and guidelines that you have to keep to when designing and publishing a website. You don't need to know the fine detail, but you must know how they apply to you in your particular job or situation.

### **Summary**

The best way to produce evidence for this unit is to start with a requirement (i.e. to communicate information to a particular Internet or intranet audience), to think about the different ways you can produce what is needed, to plan the layout, and then to produce the website code. The final steps are to check it all for errors and proper layout, and then to upload it to a web page template if necessary. You will have then demonstrated your ability to produce a single page website for a specific, useful purpose.

# WEBSITE SOFTWARE LEVEL 2

## Unit 2L

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

This unit asks you to demonstrate your skill in the *entire process* of producing a multi-page website. This means that you must provide clear evidence that you have **planned** the pages beforehand, and that you have used that plan as part of the process to produce the completed website. You should avoid the practice of opening the software and designing your work ‘on the fly’ – it rarely saves time in the long run, and the result often looks untidy and disjointed.

As much of the evidence as possible should result from the two comprehensive tasks, each starting with a clearly defined task description, and ending with a fully functioning multi-page website that meets the specification. You should save all the notes, sketches, layouts etc. that you produce during the development, so that the process can be seen in its various stages. This is good practice anyway, for many reasons, not the least of which is that if someone needs to produce a similar website or to use a special feature that you have included, all the necessary information is there, and valuable time can be saved.

It may be that you have produced a really good website from someone else’s plans. That will still be a ‘comprehensive’ piece of work, so you can use it as evidence. The planning process can be demonstrated separately, so long as it is a substantial piece of planning and may be done for someone else. What would **not** be acceptable is the demonstration of a list of skills and techniques in a separate, unconnected way.

Clearly it is not possible to use all of the features available in one website, so you should choose your assessment tasks carefully to give the widest possible coverage of standard features. When **editing, formatting and laying out content**, you might take the opportunity to try out various formats and features, colours, fonts, etc, and save a selection of options, perhaps for discussion with your manager or other members of the team. Your work might be part of a bigger project, so it would be useful to show how it fits in with the work of other people. You could print out the various options and add brief notes explaining the various features and your reasons for using them. Apart from being good assessment evidence, this practice will help the development process, because others can see exactly what you are doing and why. You then have ideal material on which to base a discussion about your development work.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

There is quite an extensive knowledge requirement for this unit, and to satisfy it you need to become comfortable with what a **website** is, what it is designed to do, and how it can be made that way. You need to be able to explain how the various possible **features** (such as multi-media, animation, hyperlinks, etc) actually work, and when (or more important), when not to, use them. You also need to demonstrate understanding of the web site as a communication tool, and how it can be used most effectively. So many web designers produce sites that look pretty and are so complicatedly animated that the actual communication is lost. You need to be able to focus on the information, the audience, the type of website and the features available to do the communication job best. This knowledge will be best demonstrated in discussions with your assessor during the development process, as will the issue of **laws and guidelines**.

Knowledge of **user issues** might be demonstrated by producing different versions of a site for particular users, or incorporating special features into the site. You would need to discuss this with your assessor to explain the additional features and the need for them.

### **Summary**

The best way to produce evidence for this unit is to start with a requirement (ie to communicate information to a particular Internet or intranet audience), to consider the various options available, to plan the layout, and then to produce the website code. The final steps are to check it all for errors and layout issues, and then to upload it all to a server and test it. You will have then demonstrated your ability to produce a multi-page website for a specific, useful purpose.

## WEBSITE SOFTWARE LEVEL 3

### Unit 3L

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit is suitable for website designers, who are proficient in the production of complex, inter-active, multi-page sites and who have an understanding of how to increase and manage traffic on them. In other words, you should not only know how to design and produce a website, you should also know how to use it for a defined purpose. You should be familiar with the Internet 'culture' that makes one site more effective than another, and you should be able to use that knowledge to benefit (legally, of course!) the owner of the site.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

In most cases, you will not be the site owner, so you first of all have to understand the objectives of the owner in operating the site in the first place. It may be an informative site, or used for e-commerce, or a host site for a particular interest group. You should be able to evaluate the legal issues and explain them to interested parties, perhaps the site owner or your manager.

Next you need to understand the content required for the site – the information, features, graphics, animations etc that make the site work. Much of this content will have to be imported from other sources and **combined** with other items. It should include security features such as a secure area (eg 'members only') and could include multi-media, animations etc.

This unit asks you to demonstrate your skill in the *entire process* of producing a multi-page website. This means that you must provide clear evidence that you have **planned** the pages beforehand, and that you have used that plan as part of the process to produce the completed website. You should avoid the practice of opening the software and designing your work 'on the fly' – it rarely saves time in the long run, and the result often looks untidy and disjointed.

As much of the evidence as possible should result from the three complex tasks, each starting with a clearly defined task description, and ending with a fully functioning multi-page website that meets the specification. You should save all the notes, sketches, layouts etc. that you produce during the development, so that the process can be seen in its various stages. This is good practice anyway, for many reasons, not the least of which is that if someone needs to produce a similar website or to use a special feature that you have included, all the necessary information is there, and valuable time can be saved.

You should bear in mind that the amount and depth of **checking and testing** should be considerable. You should, for instance, test the website using a range of browser software, and also different hardware, particularly monitors with different resolution settings. You should also test it with different speeds of Internet connection – it's no good having a complex site that takes several minutes to **load** on a 56k connection. It might even be worth considering having two versions of the site – one for broadband and one for standard dial-up. You need to understand also the implications of having very different types of monitor (CRT and TFT to name two main ones) on the design of the site, for instance where colour depth and contrast are concerned.

It may be that you have produced a really good website from someone else's plans. That will still be a 'complex' piece of work, so you can use it as evidence. The **planning** process can be demonstrated separately, so long as it is a substantial piece of planning and may be done for someone else. What would **not** be acceptable is the demonstration of a list of skills and techniques in a separate, unconnected way.

Clearly it is not possible to use all of the features available in one website, so you should choose your assessment tasks carefully to give the widest possible coverage of standard features. When **editing, formatting and laying out content**, you might take the opportunity to try out various formats and features, colours, fonts, etc, and save a selection of options, perhaps for discussion with your manager or other members of the team. Your work might be part of a bigger project, so it would be useful to show how it fits in with the work of other people. You could print out the various options and add brief notes explaining the various features and your reasons for using them. Apart from being good assessment evidence, this practice will help the development process, because others can see exactly what you are doing and why. You then have ideal material on which to base a discussion about your development work.

### **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

There is quite an extensive knowledge requirement for this unit, and to satisfy it you need to become comfortable with what a **website** is, what it is designed to do, and how it can be made that way. You need to be able to explain how the various possible **features** (such as multi-media, animation, hyperlinks, etc) actually work, and when (or more important), when not to, use them. You also need to demonstrate understanding of the web site as a communication tool, and how it can be used most effectively. So many web designers produce sites that look pretty and are so complicatedly animated that the actual communication is lost. You need to be able to focus on the information, the audience, the type of website and the features available to do the communication job best. This knowledge will be best demonstrated in discussions with your assessor during the development process, as will the issue of **laws and guidelines**. Knowledge of **user issues** might be demonstrated by producing different versions of a site for particular users, or incorporating special features into the site. You would need to discuss this with your assessor to explain the additional features and the need for them.

### **Summary**

The best way to produce evidence for this unit is to start with a requirement (ie to communicate information to a particular Internet or intranet audience), to consider the various options available, to plan the layout, and then to produce the website code. The final steps are to check it all for errors and layout issues, and then to upload it all to a server and test it. You will then have demonstrated your ability to produce a multi-page website for a specific, useful purpose.

# PRESENTATION SOFTWARE LEVEL 1

## Unit 1M

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

Presentation software is being used more and more by people who need to communicate information in a clear and interesting way. It is used at all levels in business – sales and training, for instance. It is also used very effectively in schools, colleges and universities. Often the person who will be actually giving the presentation will not have time to prepare it, and a member of the support staff might be asked to help. This is where you have the opportunity to demonstrate your skills for this unit by producing the slides for simple presentations; however you will not be expected to stand up and do the presentations yourself. One thing you should remember is that to be successful in this unit, you need to do two tasks that start with a requirement - eg: a written draft with drawings, sketches, or at least the locations of suitable illustrations – and finish with a set of presentation slides that can be used to illustrate a presentation. It is **not** sufficient just to demonstrate to your assessor a series of un-connected skills that could be used to produce slides.

### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

#### Preparation

First of all, because you will probably be doing the job for someone else, you must be very clear about what it is that you have been asked to produce. It might help to write down yourself exactly what you want to do and how you intend to do it. Remember, your task will be to produce the slides, which will contain some text and maybe simple diagrams or other images. You will not be asked to animate anything.

#### Producing the slides

Now you can begin to produce the slides, placing text and images in the agreed layout. You can do this in any order, because the slides can be moved around later. The important thing here is to use the **basic techniques** in the presentation software to produce professional looking slides. So you might take a copy of the slides at different stages to show how you produced them – it takes seconds just to save the current version under a different name, and it will provide additional evidence for the **handling files** component as well. You might also have some suggestions for improvement while you are working, so why not save a couple of alternative versions so that you can offer them for consideration? That has covered **combining information, editing presentations** and **formatting slides**.

#### Finishing the task

Having produced the ingredients for the presentation, you then need put them in the proper order – you will have been told this at the start. But before you do that, you should **check the presentation** - proof read and correct any mistakes, look at the slides to make sure they look right, and maybe double check that all the information is actually there! When you have got the slides into the right order, you need to set up the **slide presentation**. Try out different kinds of slide show, using automatic change with different time intervals, and the manual method of changing slides (the most common method). Lastly, print out the whole presentation in the form of hand-outs for the audience.

**How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

You should, demonstrate most of the knowledge and understanding requirements during the tasks and activities surrounding them. You also need to show your understanding of an additional range of features that you might have to use at some time in the future. This should be done in a discussion with your assessor, during which you can explain and maybe illustrate the use of some of the other available features, along with the circumstances in which they could be used. At the same time you could cover the last few items that haven't been covered elsewhere.

**Summary**

To successfully complete this unit you must show that you can take a set of presentation notes with some instructions and turn them into a simple presentation that is suitable for the audience and that gets the message across clearly and in a way that people will remember.

## PRESENTATION SOFTWARE LEVEL 2

### Unit 2M

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

##### Preparation

To successfully complete this unit, you need to demonstrate that you can produce a fairly complex presentation using a presentation software package. So you should start out with a clear statement of what the end-product needs to do and what it should look like. At this level, you should be able to start off with the text, and images required, and some instructions as to the general format – colour, fonts, etc. You might also have to use a standard format, with a company logo and background. You should understand very clearly at this stage exactly what is required as a finished product. You must also clearly understand the intended audience – they may have particular requirements (eg larger print, particular colour combinations, etc). You might need to discuss the details with the person who is to give the presentation, to agree and clarify the details. This will satisfy some of the **producing presentations** requirement, and will also demonstrate knowledge in the **produce information** component.

##### Producing the slides

Now you can begin to produce the slides, placing text and images in the agreed layout. In practice, this can be done in any order, because you can change the slide order later. The important thing here is to use the techniques available to you within the presentation software to produce a professional looking presentation. So you might take a copy of the presentation at different stages to show the progression – it takes seconds just to save the current version under a different name, and it will provide additional evidence for the **handling files** component as well. You might also have some suggestions for improvement while you are working, so why not save a couple of alternative versions so that you can offer them for consideration? That has covered **combining information, editing presentations** and **formatting slides**.

##### Finishing the task

Having produced the ingredients for the presentation, you then need to order them and decide upon the best way to present them. But before you do that, you should **check the presentation** - proof read and correct any mistakes, look at the slides to make sure they look right, and maybe double check that all the information is actually there! Now you can set up the actual presentation, decide on how to **present** the slides on-screen using an appropriate choice of animations, methods and timings of advancement for the slides, etc. You should also organise the speaker's notes at this stage, and save the slides as a completed presentation. Note that you do not have to give a presentation yourself, but the finished product must be in a format and of a standard that can be used by someone else with little preparation on their part.

##### What do I have to include?

Clearly, there are many features available to you for use in presentations. You could include multi-media files to provide background music, video illustrations or photographs, or you could create your own cartoon animation to get a particular message across. But you should not fall into the trap of using everything in one or even two presentations. Only use what is appropriate – after all, this unit is about producing professional presentations that are fit for purpose, not about demonstrating the use of every feature available.

**How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

You should, demonstrate most of the knowledge and understanding requirements during the tasks and activities surrounding them. You also need to show your understanding of an additional range of features that you might have to use at some time in the future. This should be done in a discussion with your assessor, during which you can explain and maybe illustrate the use of some of the other available features, along with the circumstances in which they could be used. At the same time you could cover the last few items that haven't been covered elsewhere.

**Summary**

To successfully complete this unit you must show that you can take a set of presentation notes and turn them into a successful presentation that is suitable for the audience and that gets the message across clearly and in a way that people will remember.

**FAQ**

What example could I use to link information within the same type of software?

*Hyperlinks*

## PRESENTATION SOFTWARE LEVEL 3

### Unit 3M

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

To be successful in this unit, you need to show that you can use a presentation software package to produce technically complex presentations, making effective use of multimedia such as background music or video clips and including, where appropriate, some interactive features. You should also be able to operate the presentation software, perhaps as a technical assistant to the presenter.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

##### Preparation

You should start out with a clear statement of what the end-product needs to do and what it should look like. At this level, you should be able to start off with an outline of the text, and images required, and some instructions as to the general format – colour, fonts, etc. You might also have to use a standard format, with a company logo and background. You should understand very clearly at this stage exactly what is required as a finished product. You must also clearly understand the intended audience – they may have particular requirements (eg larger print, particular colour combinations, etc). You might need to discuss the task with the person who is to give the presentation, to agree and clarify the details.

You will need to source and prepare any multi-media files, convert them into the correct format and set up the time-line so that you can synchronise the slides. You may have to use your computer to record and digitise sound items and to create or capture video clips. This will satisfy some of the **producing presentations** requirement, and will also demonstrate knowledge in the **produce information** component.

##### Producing the slides

Now you can begin to produce the slides, placing text and images in the agreed layout. In practice, this can be done in any order, because you can change the slide order later. The important thing here is to use the techniques available to you within the presentation software to produce a professional looking presentation. So you might take a copy of the presentation at different stages to show the progression and it will provide additional evidence for the **handling files** component as well. You might also have some suggestions for improvement while you are working, so why not save a couple of alliterative versions so that you can offer them for consideration? That has covered **combining information, editing presentations and formatting slides**.

## **Finishing the task**

Having produced the presentation, you then need to order them and decide upon the best way to present them. Before you do that, you should **check the presentation** - proofread and correct any mistakes, look at the slides to make sure they look right, and maybe double check that all the information is actually there! You should also check that the multi-media files actually run and that you have got the timing right. These are often the source of the most acute embarrassment when they go wrong, so extra care is always needed with them. Now you can set up the actual presentation, decide on how to **present** the slides on-screen using an appropriate choice of animations, methods and timings of advancement for the slides, etc. You should also organise the speaker's notes at this stage, and save the slides as a completed presentation. At some stage you should also save a presentation as a web page. Remember that although you do not have to give a presentation yourself, the finished product must be in a format and of a standard that can be used by someone else with little preparation on their part. You should therefore do a complete rehearsal of the presentation yourself so that you are confident that it all works.

## **What do I have to include?**

Clearly, there are many features available to you for use in presentations. You need to include multi-media files to provide background music, video illustrations or photographs; you could even create your own cartoon animation to get a particular message across, however, you should not fall into the trap of using everything in one or even two presentations. Only use what is appropriate – after all, this unit is about producing professional presentations that are fit for purpose, not about demonstrating the use of every feature available.

## **How do I demonstrate knowledge?**

You should, demonstrate most of the knowledge and understanding requirements during the tasks and activities surrounding them. You also need to show your understanding of an additional range of features that you might have to use at some time in the future. This should be done in a discussion with your assessor, during which you can explain and maybe illustrate the use of some of the other available features, along with the circumstances in which they could be used. At the same time you could cover the last few items that haven't been covered elsewhere.

## **Summary**

To successfully complete this unit you must show that you can take a set of presentation notes and turn them into a successful presentation that is suitable for the audience and that gets the message across clearly and in a way that people will remember. By using a wide range of technically complex features such as multi-media, you will show that you are able to make full and effective use of available technology.

## **FAQ**

How do I maintain consistency of style throughout my presentation?

*One example would be to use a template. A template is a design or style which can be used throughout the presentation, for example, a particular background style which can be used to give the presentation a professional appearance. In some software, this can be found in the Format, Slide Design menu option.*

*Another example would be the AutoContent Wizard which includes suggestions for text on slides. The candidate could use this to personalise the text in each slide.*

*In certain software, there is a master slide facility; this is also used for consistency of style and formatting throughout presentations.*

# SPECIALIST OR BESPOKE SOFTWARE LEVEL 1

## Unit 1N

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit is especially designed for the users of software of a specialist nature, it may be a special combination of certain standard software applications, but it will certainly be almost unique and it won't quite fall into any of the other categories. If you can possibly fit it into one of the single-type standard categories (spreadsheets, databases, etc) then do so and do the corresponding unit. However, it is a substantial piece of software – not just a small utility to do one or two routine jobs – particularly if it has been specially designed for an organisation to a particular job, and it doesn't fit anywhere else, then it is eligible for this unit. This might include desk top publishing software or some of the sophisticated real-time software used to control processes, things that move, etc, however, **still require substantial input from an operator.**

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

The tasks here are described as being 'straightforward' and that means routine, using the main functions of the software to produce an un-complicated but useful job. As with the other software units, it is not sufficient to demonstrate your ability to use a series of functions or tools in an un-connected way. You should select two tasks that are part of your normal work. The practical side of this unit comes in two parts; first, your ability to **Handle files** (open, close, create, save, save as, print) – these are straightforward and you will do these anyway as part of the two tasks.

The second part involves you actually using the software to produce a finished article. Taking Computer Aided Design (CAD) as an example, you would first be given a rough sketch of an object, floor plan, etc. with dimensions and other features indicated. You would then create a new file and produce a drawing to the correct scale and dimensions, with all the features as required, but with nice straight lines and smooth curves instead of rough-jagged lines in the sketch. You would then save the file and give it an appropriate name, putting it in the correct folder so that you can find it easily. Finally, you would probably print the drawing out and give it to the person who gave you the task. Next, you should choose another task, preferably using some different tools and features (again, basic ones) – doing the first task repeatedly, just changing a small part of it is not acceptable.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

The software you are using is rather more specialist than the ordinary word processor, spreadsheet or database – it has been designed to do a particular job, because there is nothing else available, so, firstly you should have a good basic idea of what makes this software different and why it has to be different. For instance, using a CAD package, you should know that CAD software makes it much quicker and easier to produce accurate drawings than any other method, particularly hand-drafting. Also you should know that it is easy to send drawings to other places, and that the drawing files can be used to set up special equipment manufacturing the things that you have drawn. Also the drawings take up much less space than the hand-drawn ones. This is basic information that shows that you understand the reasons for having this software.

Lastly, you should show that you know what all the basic software tools are used for, and how to choose which ones to use for a particular task. Most of this will be shown during the two tasks that you do in the practical part.

**Summary**

This unit is specially designed for software that is out of the ordinary, specialist and cannot be replaced by a standard application. It is likely to be quite large with many different functions, and so individual operators will probably not use all of the application. Successful completion of this unit depends upon you showing three things – firstly the skill to use at least part of the software to do your job, secondly knowledge of the basic tools and functions; and thirdly that you understand the basics of why the software is suitable. This unit will provide much wider opportunity for assessment, covering the use of software previously excluded because it simply didn't fit.

# SPECIALIST OR BESPOKE SOFTWARE LEVEL 2

## Unit 2N

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit is especially designed for the users of software of a specialist nature, it may be a special combination of certain standard software applications, but it will certainly be almost unique and it won't quite fall into any of the other categories. If you can possibly fit it into one of the single-type standard categories (spreadsheets, databases, etc) then do so and do the corresponding unit. However, if it is a substantial piece of software - not just a small utility to do one or two routine jobs - particularly if it has been specially designed for an organisation to a particular job, and it doesn't fit anywhere else, then it is eligible for this unit. This might include desk top publishing software or some of the sophisticated real-time software used to control processes, things that move, etc, however, **still require substantial input from an operator.**

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

Well, that depends largely on the nature of the software that you are using. However, there are a number of standard features that you will need to address and produce some examples of. There should for instance, be a clearly stated, quite comprehensive tasking - a requirement to produce some kind of output using the software application. There should be a planning phase where you would analyse the task requirement to find out exactly what it is, and then you should decide exactly how you are going to do the job. Use a good range of features and tools provided with the software to **Enter, edit, process** and often **Combine information** from other sources; this would be followed by a comprehensive check of the work to make sure it is what is required and that it is of the appropriate quality. Of course, various file handling techniques also need to be demonstrated to complete the process and to organise and save files.

#### How do I demonstrate knowledge?

Because this software will be of a specialist nature, it will have certain capabilities, **Tools and functions** that are unique and purpose-built. Even if you don't use all of them - you should have a working knowledge of the others. For instance, if the software needs certain data or settings to enable it to work in a certain way, you probably don't get involved in setting that up, however, you should still know first of all these settings/data are needed and roughly why they are needed. Secondly you should know how to set up and use most of the tools and features, even if you don't often use them. You should know what they are all used for, and when they should be used. Remember that you will be dealing with 'more complex' tasks here - they will have some substance and will have features that require some thought on your part, so that the end product is less mundane and is more professional in appearance.

Lastly, you should know that you have a good understanding of what the software is and does. You should also be able to explain why the software had to be specifically designed and what makes it better at doing its job than, say, a well designed database or a spreadsheet using advanced features.

**Summary**

This unit is specifically designed for software that is out of the ordinary, specialist and cannot be replaced by a standard application. It is likely to be quite large with many different functions, and so individual operators will probably not use all of the application. Successful completion of this unit depends upon you showing three things - firstly the skill to use a significant part of the software to do your job; secondly knowledge of the other features that you don't use; and thirdly that you understand how and why the application is suited to the task. This unit will provide wider opportunity for assessment, covering the use of software previously excluded because it simply didn't fit.

## SPECIALIST OR BESPOKE SOFTWARE LEVEL 3

### Unit 3N

#### Assessment Guidance

You will need to assist in the planning of and carry out **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit is especially designed for the users of software of a specialist nature, it may be a special combination of certain standard software applications, but it will certainly be almost unique and it won't quite fall into any of the other categories. If you can possibly fit it into one of the single-type standard categories (spreadsheets, databases, etc) then do so and do the corresponding unit. However, if it is a substantial piece of software – not just a small utility to do one or two routine jobs – particularly if it has been specially designed for an organisation to a particular job, and it doesn't fit anywhere else, then it is eligible for this unit. This might include desk top publishing software or some of the sophisticated real-time software used to control processes, things that move, etc, however, **still require substantial input from an operator.**

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

Well, that depends largely on the nature of the software that you are using, however, whatever the software, this unit is about being able to fully exploit the package concerned. It is likely to be an expensive one and whoever authorised the expenditure will need to see that it is being used to the full. That means using the vast majority of the tools, features and functions, especially the more complex ones – those that make it different from the standard packages.

At this level you need to assist in the planning of complex tasks using the software, so you have some chance of selecting a task and planning to use the features required for the unit. This will first of all involve **Combining information** from a number of different sources and ensuring it is compatible by **Handling the files** efficiently and converting them to useable formats where necessary. You should also include the use of devices such as hyperlinks, object linking and embedding, and taking different versions of information from different users and combining them in one document or file. This might involve, for instance, setting the software to produce a single real-time output from the input of several input signals of the same or different types, as in a complex digital multimedia recording or a traffic control system. It might involve the combination of data from a number of different authors working on the same piece, perhaps in different languages, using complex text analysis tools. You can see that these examples of software are probably not available on the High Street and are likely to be large, complex and expensive.

In the course of **Entering, editing and processing information**, you are likely to have to plan and set up different ways of dealing with the information, using tools and functions that you have customised yourself. You must make sure that the information you process is technically complex and extensive, and you must exploit the software to the full. A good example might be the full use of a digital recording console in a professional recording studio, as opposed to a simple graphic equaliser on a home stereo system.

More complex information requires more thorough checking using more complex techniques. Whatever techniques you use they must at least be appropriate for the job, and be selected by you. You should show that you are aware of the checking methods, potential errors and the likely consequences of those errors – in other words whatever methods you use, you should be able to justify their use.

### **How can I demonstrate knowledge?**

Because this software will be of a specialist nature, it will have certain capabilities, **Tools and functions** that are unique and purpose-built. You should know what these are and how you can use them to fully exploit the software. You should demonstrate this knowledge in the practical tasks, but your assessor will probably want to expand the discussion to other aspects of the package that you haven't actually used.

Lastly, you should show that you are able to identify changes that could be made to the way in which the software is used, so that tasks are more efficient, easier to set up and carry out, and have a higher success rate. For instance, you might identify groups or sequences of actions or operations that are frequently performed, but are time consuming and possibly easy to do wrong. You might suggest a small macro or similar to ease the problem. On the other hand, you might see that a particular function or tool could be used for part of a task where it is not normally used, possibly with a little modification. You could demonstrate this in the planning stage of one or more of your substantial complex tasks.

### **Summary**

This unit is specifically designed for software that is out of the ordinary, specialist and cannot be replaced by a standard application. It is likely to be quite large with many different functions, and so some operators will probably not use all of the application. Successful completion of this unit depends upon you showing three things – firstly the skill to use most of the software tools and features to do your job; secondly good knowledge of the other features that you don't use and the ability to set up tools and features to do a particular job; and thirdly that you understand how and why the application is suited to the task and can suggest ways in which it can be better used. This unit will provide much wider opportunity for assessment, covering the use of software previously excluded because it simply didn't fit.

# EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF IT LEVEL 1

## Unit 10

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two straightforward tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit is all about your own use of IT – how it affects you and others in your daily life, both at work and at home. It can be very useful, for instance as part of your annual or periodic appraisal, helping you to stand back and think about how you use IT. The components in the unit might seem complicated, but actually you do most of these things without thinking. Your assessor will guide you in finding the appropriate evidence – most of which will happen naturally.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

Well, this part is really concerned with how people can make things easier for themselves by using IT instead of writing in a book, using the telephone or a typewriter, or going to the library. Get into the habit of looking at a task that you or someone else does regularly and seeing if you can think of a way that task could be made easier using IT. For instance, you might see a man in a library searching through mountains of books for one piece of information. You might ask yourself “Wouldn’t he be better off using a search engine on the Internet?” Maybe, maybe not, but there could be a reason why he isn’t using that nice new PC in the corner – maybe he is frightened to use it - many people are – maybe he has already tried and he isn’t skilled enough, or maybe his bit of information just isn’t there. Those are the kind of things you should think about when doing the **Analysing and evaluating** component of the unit. You should discuss the results with your assessor.

The other skills and techniques component in this unit is the one about **Learning**. We all have to learn at some stage of our lives, and when we are using IT, we are generally in a constant state of learning – we have to in order to keep up with progress. So if you are in that situation, it should be very easy to do this component, which asks you to go and get help from the most appropriate person when you come across a problem you can’t solve. It also asks you to seek advice from a colleague or expert about learning some new skills to fill a ‘skills gap’ that you or someone else has identified. In other words, you or someone else will identify something you need to be able to do but can’t, and then you have to take some steps towards learning how to do it. Talk to your assessor about how you can identify and record evidence for this – usually it will be in the form of a witness statement recording the details of you identifying a shortfall in your skills and then doing something about it. Further evidence might be a written application for a training course and the results of the course at the end.

#### How can I demonstrate knowledge?

At this level, you need to have a good understanding of why people use IT, how they can gain better access, what the dangers and risks are, and lastly what is available to help them learn to use IT better.

So first of all, what effect does the use of IT have on people? Think about common everyday jobs – how were they done before IT came along?, are they done using IT now?, if not, why not?, if so, what difference has IT made to the job? A guided discussion with your assessor will help you to develop your understanding.

Next, we might go back to the man in the library – how could IT help his quest for information, and how could this be applied in other situations that you know of?

And so to Health and Safety – you should be able to demonstrate, both while you are working and in discussion with your assessor, a good basic knowledge of the health and safety risks to yourself and others in using IT systems (workstation, laptop, etc) and other hardware such as printers. You should also be able to discuss the parts of health and safety law that affect your own use of IT.

IT security is always a problem no matter how simple or complex the system is. This is about the kind of things (**Security risks**) that can happen to data if you don't follow basic security procedures or if there is a problem with the hardware or software. You should be able to discuss, in simple terms, things like data theft and how to avoid it, viruses and what they can do to data and systems, dangers from e-mail attachments and how to minimise them, and the risks from unauthorised persons gaining access.

Lastly, you should have some knowledge of the vast array of computer based learning materials available to help you improve your IT skills and knowledge.

### **Summary**

This is a largely theoretical unit in that there is little to do on the IT system itself, however, it is important that you as an IT user have a good grasp of the issues surrounding the use of IT and the ways in which you can improve how you use IT. Along with that of course comes the prospect of better job opportunities because you are more effective in what you do and you know how and where to get training when you need it.

# EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF IT LEVEL 2

## Unit 20

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to produce **at least two comprehensive tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit is not so much about actually using IT, but about how effective you are in using IT, how good you are at using IT and what effect the use of IT has on people's lives. It is also to do with how you are going to improve your skills and knowledge to make you more effective in using IT. You should take this opportunity to stand back a little from the nuts and bolts of your daily IT activities and spend some time working through this unit. You will almost certainly find it useful in focussing on things that are important to you and your ability to use this very important work tool called Information Technology.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

Many people find doing this kind of thing a bit difficult, mainly because it is often wrapped up in jargon and long words, and it all seems rather academic. Nothing could be further from the truth. The process we are talking about is quite straightforward and is often the same as you do for your annual appraisal interview. You need to be able to do two things. Firstly you should be able to look at the way you and the people around you use your IT systems and be able to make some comment about that and the effect it has on the work that goes on around you. You might, for instance, have to share an old, unreliable printer that slows up your work output. You might try and solve that problem by putting the files to be printed onto a disk and taking it round to the next office to be printed on their already busy printer. In this case, the way you use IT is forced upon you by the poor equipment you have to use, and your solution has a not very good effect on the work output of the office next door. You should be able to identify these issues, comment upon them and perhaps suggest some ways of improving the situation. That's the **Analysing and evaluating** component dealt with.

The other thing you need to do concerns **Learning**. It is almost certain you have done this before without realising it. You go through the process of identifying your own learning needs generally for one of two reasons: either you are unable to do a job that you have at the moment, or you want to apply for a job that you think you might have difficulty with. Either way, you will need some help in identifying exactly what you need to do to solve the problem. There is always somebody who will help you with that and you should show that you are able to seek out that advice. This is an important 'life skill' that you will use time and again throughout your life. There is also a vast amount of information about developments in using IT – new software applications and new ways of using the existing ones – often on specialist websites run by people like you, with the same interest in learning. Lastly, there is the information about various ways of learning, and you should show that you are able to seek out advice on these as well.

#### How can I demonstrate knowledge?

This particular unit is about the use of IT in general – how it is used to help people in their jobs and how it is used to help businesses to succeed. It is also about how the use of IT is changing our lives – the use of on-line services such as shopping, banking and communication. You should be able to talk in fairly general terms about this and give some common examples. You should be aware of the difficulties some people have in accessing IT and of some of the ways to help them **Improve that Access. Safety and Security** are two more subjects that you should know something about – you, of course, have a responsibility to help to maintain a safe working environment and you should be able to discuss that in relation to your own workplace. And you should know the dangers of downloading software and data from the Internet, including e-mail attachments. In other words, you know how to do your bit towards keeping the system, its data and your colleagues out of danger.

Lastly, you should have some views on IT based **Learning**, both from locally based disk sources and from the Internet. You should have some idea of what is available and what the advantages and drawbacks are.

All these items of knowledge should come out either in the course of your practical activities or during discussions with your assessor.

### **Summary**

This is a largely theoretical unit in that there is little to do on the IT system itself, however, it is important that you as an IT user have a good grasp of the issues surrounding the use of IT and the ways in which you can improve how you use IT. Along with that of course comes the prospect of better job opportunities because you are more effective in what you do and you know how and where to get training when you need it.

# EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF IT LEVEL 3

## Unit 30

### Assessment Guidance

You will need to assist in the planning of and carry out **at least three substantial and complex tasks**, demonstrating skills, techniques and knowledge outlined in the unit.

This unit is not so much about actually using IT, but about how effective you are in using IT, how good you are at using IT and what effect the use IT has on people's lives. It is to do with how you are going to improve your skills and knowledge to make you more effective in using IT, and finally, it's to do with your ability to help other people to take full advantage of opportunities to use IT. As an experienced IT user you will probably have some responsibility towards other, less experienced users, so you should take this opportunity to stand back a little from the nuts and bolts of your daily IT activities and spend some time working through this unit. You will almost certainly find it useful in focussing on things that will help you and others to improve your access and your ability to use this very important work tool called Information Technology.

#### How can I satisfy the skills and techniques part?

Many people find doing this kind of thing a bit difficult, mainly because it is often wrapped up in jargon and long words, and it all seems rather academic. Nothing could be further from the truth. The process we are talking about is quite straightforward and is often the same as you do for your annual appraisal interview. In addition, the Level 3 parts of the skills and technique components are things that you, as an experienced IT user might well be asked to do in the workplace. You need to be able to do two things. Firstly, you should be able to look at the way you and the people around you use your IT systems and be able to gather relevant information. This should include information on the effect IT use has on the work that goes on around you, and the criteria that are applied to it. You might, for instance, have to share an old, unreliable printer that slows up your work output. You might try and solve that problem by putting the files to be printed onto a disk and taking it round to the next office to be printed on their already busy printer. In this case, the way you use IT is forced upon you by the poor equipment you have to use, and your solution has a not very good effect on the work output of the office next door. You should be able to identify these issues, draw conclusions from them and make recommend ways of improving the situation. That's the **Analysing and evaluating** component dealt with.

The other thing you need to do concerns **Learning**. It is almost certain you have done this before without realising it. You go through the process of identifying your own learning needs generally for one of two reasons: either you are unable to do a job that you have at the moment, or you want to apply for a job that you think you might have difficulty with. Either way, you will need some help in identifying exactly what you need to do to solve the problem. There is always somebody who will help you with that and you should show that you are able to seek out that advice. This is an important 'life skill' that you will use time and again throughout your life. There is also a vast amount of information about developments in using IT – new software applications and new ways of using the existing ones – often on specialist websites run by people like you, with the same interest in learning.

Lastly, there is the information about various ways of learning, and you should show that you are able to seek out advice on these as well. The Level 3 addition to this is the ability to be the person who helps and advises others on learning. Again, this skill can only come with experience and you should demonstrate to your assessor that you can help others to identify their own learning needs and help them to work through the problem to identify the best learning solution. You might, for instance, be a team leader for a small group of four or five IT users. Part of your job might be to continually evaluate their ability to use the systems and software to do their jobs, and to make recommendations as to how they can maintain their skill levels. That would be ideal evidence for this component.

### **How can I demonstrate knowledge?**

This particular unit is about the use of IT in general – how it is used to help people in their jobs and how it is used to help businesses to succeed. It is also about how the use of IT is changing our lives – the use of on-line services such as shopping, banking and communication. You should be able to talk in quite specific terms about this and give detailed examples. You should be aware of the difficulties some people have in accessing IT of the impact that has on them and of some of the ways to help them **Improve** that **Access**. **Safety** and **Security** are two more subjects that you should know something about –you, of course, have a responsibility to help to maintain a safe working environment and you should be able to discuss that in relation to your own workplace and as it applies to others. You should also know how to explain health and safety risks to others. You should know the risks to systems connected to the Internet from viruses, Trojan horses, data theft, etc. You should also be able to discuss risks from other disasters such as fire, power loss, etc. In other words, you know how to do your bit towards keeping the system, its data and your colleagues out of danger.

Lastly you should have some views on IT based **Learning**, both from locally based disk sources and from the Internet. You should have some idea of what is available and what the advantages and drawbacks are, and you should know how to use that knowledge to help other people to learn using IT. All these items of knowledge should come out either in the course of your practical activities or during discussions with your assessor.

### **Summary**

This is a largely theoretical unit in that there is little to do on the IT system itself, however, it is important that you as an experienced IT user have a good grasp of the issues surrounding the use of IT the ways in which IT use can be improved, and the ways in which security risks can be countered. Along with that of course comes the prospect of better job opportunities because you are more effective in what you do and you know how and where to get training when you need it.