



# CHALLENGE TEST

*Candidate's Handbook*



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## PREFACE

This handbook is intended to guide candidates sitting the NCTVET Challenge Test. It gives general guidelines relating to assessment requirements, procedures, and regulations. It should also assist candidates in making the best preparation for their written and practical assessments.

It is hoped that candidates will find the guidelines in this document helpful. If candidates follow these guidelines, they will know what to expect, what to do and the materials that are needed for the assessments.

The NVQ-J or CVQ Certificate of Competence that is awarded at the end of your assessment is recognized by employers nationally and internationally and serves as evidence of your competence and achievements.

If you have any other queries, please contact:

***The Customer Service Representative  
Information and Records Management Unit***

***Tel: 876-994-3278***

***Email: [irm\\_nctvet@heart-nta.org](mailto:irm_nctvet@heart-nta.org)***

***Or***

***Visit us at our office***

***NCTVET***

***The National TVET Centre***

***Gordon Town Road***

***Kingston 6***

# INTRODUCTON

## The NCTVET

The National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET) was established in 1994 by an amendment of the HEART Act. The NCTVET is the authorized body which is empowered to improve, integrate, and standardize technical and vocational training in Jamaica. The Council works closely with industry personnel to ensure the development of competency standards for training and assessment to remain current and responsive to the needs of a constantly changing job market.

## The Mission Statement

The Mission of the NCTVET is **“to promote quality outcomes in training and provide assessment and certification for TVET in response to the *social environment*, labour market requirements and national development”**.

## The Main Functions of the NCTVET are as follows:

- promote continuous improvement in the competencies and productive capacity of the Jamaican labour force by means of approving training standards for technical and vocational occupations.
- provide qualifications in the form of certificates and other awards to persons who have met the national and regional standards of competence. This includes the certification of experienced workers by recognizing and crediting their prior experience and competence.
- approve and accredit TVET training programmes which meet the established standards.
- evaluation individuals' competence through the provision of assessment services.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The NCTVET recognizes that there are many individuals who, over time, have acquired the requisite competence to perform at world-class standards yet, they do not possess a formal certification/award as evidence of their competence. As a result, the NCTVET has designed and made available Levels 1 and 2 Challenge Tests to individuals who are confident that they are performing at the standard prescribed by the industry.

A Challenge Test is a summative assessment comprising of theory questions and practical tasks based on the competencies outlined in a Qualification Plan. Candidates are required to access or acquire the relevant Competency Standards available on the NCTVET website ([nctvetjamaica.org](http://nctvetjamaica.org)) or Curriculum (HEART Media Services Unit) which should be used to guide their preparation for the assessment. Gaps identified must be bridged through formal or informal training before the assessment.



## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

### Application Form

Challenge Test application forms are available at the Information and Records Management Unit or on the NCTVET Website at [www.nctvetjamaica.org](http://www.nctvetjamaica.org), under the tab “Resources.”

When applying for assessments the following must be observed:

- All sections of the form must be completed.

- The completed application form must be submitted with the appropriate proof of payment of the relevant fees *by the stipulated date*.

The NCTVET reserves the right to accept or refuse an application. Therefore, in exercising this right, the NCTVET may refuse an application that does not meet the assessment *requirements*, or which is received after the closing dates or for which the incorrect fees are paid. The NCTVET also reserves the right to cancel an application at any stage of the process before or during the assessment if any irregularities are found.

### **Withdrawal of Application**

Request for withdrawal of application must be made in writing. Request for deferment is treated as a request for withdrawal from the assessment. A new application along with the relevant fees in keeping with the established assessment schedule must be submitted for another sitting of the assessment. See section on **Refund or Transfer of Fees** for details.

### **Application for Re-sit Assessment**

A candidate may re-sit any components of the assessment providing that the re-sit is done within three (3) years of the date of the *first sitting* of the assessment. If a candidate was unsuccessful in any area of the assessment, i.e., achieved a rating below **3**, it is recommended that he/she seek *formal/informal* training intervention before re-assessment is done. If three (3) years elapse before a candidate *successfully completes*, all components of the assessment will have to be repeated.

### **Special Needs Candidates**

Consideration will be given to candidates with physical disabilities for special arrangements to be made during the assessment. However, the requests must be made in writing at the time of the application. The Application Form for Special Needs Candidates must be completed and submitted by the stipulated application deadline for the respective assessment period.



## FEES

### General Information

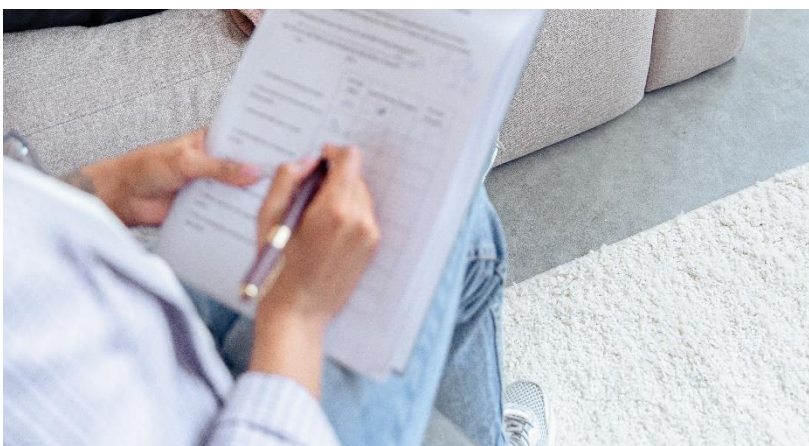
The Information and Records Management Unit, NCTVET, may be contacted for information on the fee structure. The NCTVET reserves the right to alter the fees for assessment services. The fee structure is also available on the NCTVET website at, [www.nctvetjamaica.org](http://www.nctvetjamaica.org)

### Payment

- Fees must be lodged at any branch of the **National Commercial Bank (NCB) to the account of HEART Trust/NTA – NCTVET Account # 211888458** using the NCTVET bank voucher only.
- NCTVET bank vouchers can be collected at the NCTVET or the HEART Trust/NTA Regional Offices. All fees must be paid in full at the time of application.

### Refund or Transfer of Fees

**The registration fee is not refundable.** Assessment fee may be refunded in full (100%) or transferred to another assessment period only if the candidate is prevented by accident or illness from sitting all components of the assessment. A written request accompanied by a medical certificate must be submitted to the Information and Records Management Unit within three (3) weeks of the date of that assessment.



## REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

**The Registration Process involves the following:**

- (i) Submission of the application form and *proof of* payment of the relevant fees to NCTVET by the stipulated deadline *per assessment cycle*
- (ii) Acknowledgement of receipt of application by the NCTVET
- (iii) Assigning a Prior Learning Advisor to provide orientation
- (iv) Assigning of registration numbers to candidates by the NCTVET

### Registration Number

A candidate is identified by his/her registration number.

Registration numbers **must** be used in all assessments and in all future correspondence and enquiries to the *NCTVET*.

### Access to Application Forms

Assessment Application forms may be access on the *NCTVET* website at [www.nctvetjamaica.org](http://www.nctvetjamaica.org) or the *NCTVET* Office, Gordon Town Road, Kingston 6



## ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assessment of candidate(s) performance will be done via a written and a practical evaluation. This type of assessment gives the candidate the opportunity to provide the evidence of their knowledge, skills and attitudes that meet the specified industrial standards.



## THE ASSESSMENT

The assessment will be administered in two formats:

- i. Written *referred to as External Written Assessment (EWA)*
- ii. Practical *referred to as External Practical Assessment (EPA)*

## Assessment Format

### Written Assessment

The written paper will take the form of multiple-choice questions and will test the requirements of the Competency Standards as listed in the Qualification Plan, using an integrated approach.

The time allowed for the theoretical component of the assessment is one (1) hour.

### The Practical Assessment

The practical assessment will test the candidate's ability to perform a given task or set of tasks. Candidates may be given a maximum of five related tasks to complete, which will be rated by the External Assessor using a set of established criteria. The assessment will be conducted under assessment conditions; therefore, all assessment regulations should be adhered to. (See pages 12 - 14). The timeframe allotted for most skills is 3 – 4 hours.

### Rating Scale for Level 1 and 2 Assessments

A rating scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest and 5 the highest, will be used to rate the *candidate's* performance and achievement. In order to obtain a NVQ-J or CVQ Certificate of Competence, the *candidate* will be required to achieve a rating of at least 3 in the assessment.

To standardize the rating of candidates, a conversion scale is shown below. This is applicable for both theory and practical assessments.

**CVQ/NVQ-J  
CONVERSION TABLE**

<b>Level 1 (%)</b>	<b>Levels 2 (%)</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>GPA Scale</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Certification Status</b>
<b>75 - 100</b>	<b>80 - 100</b>	<b>A- to A+</b>	<b>3.4 to 4.0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Competent/ Mastery</b>
<b>60 – 74</b>	<b>65 – 79</b>	<b>B- to B+</b>	<b>2.4 to 3.3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Competent</b>
<b>45 – 59</b>	<b>50 - 64</b>	<b>C- to C+</b>	<b>1.4 to 2.3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Competent</b>
<b>30 – 44</b>	<b>35 - 49</b>	<b>D to D+</b>	<b>1.0 – 1.3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Not Yet Competent</b>
<b>Below 30</b>	<b>Below 35</b>	<b>E to F</b>	<b>Below 1.0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Not Yet Competent</b>

Performance ratings of ‘3’ and above indicate competency in the areas that were assessed. Performance ratings of 1 and 2 indicate the need for additional training and practice. This intervention should be accomplished prior to any further assessment.

**Performance Rating Narration for Level 1**

Range 5	<b>Candidate demonstrated a working knowledge of the skill and can perform adeptly, with initiative and adaptability to problem situations with a mastery of related language and technical knowledge .</b>
Range 4	<b>Candidate demonstrated sufficient knowledge and ability in the skill area to perform satisfactorily and apply working rules for problem solution with correct related language usage.</b>
Range 3	<b>Candidate demonstrated sufficient knowledge and ability to perform in some aspects of the skill area and requires considerable assistance and supervision.</b>
Range 2	<b>Candidate demonstrated limited knowledge and ability to perform in some aspects of the skill area and requires considerable assistance and supervision.</b>
Range 1	<b>Candidate has not demonstrated sufficient evidence of the knowledge, ability, and attitudes in the skill area on which a judgment can be made.</b>

**Performance Rating Narration for Level 2**

Range 5	-	<b>Candidate demonstrated a mastery of technical and related knowledge which spans a wide range of complex conditions and can perform with a high level of professionalism.</b>
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- Range 4 - **Candidate demonstrated a working knowledge of the skill and is able to perform with initiative and adaptability to a range of complex conditions.**
- Range 3 - **Candidate demonstrated sufficient knowledge and ability to operate satisfactorily in a range of conditions and apply working rules for problem solving.**
- Range 2 - **Candidate demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skill to operate satisfactorily in a range of conditions but requires periodic supervision.**
- Range 1 - **Candidate has not demonstrated sufficient evidence of knowledge and skill from which a judgment can be made.**



## **PREPARING FOR THE ASSESSMENT**

### **Studying for your Assessment**

1. Ensure that you source a copy of the Competency Standards or Curriculum related to the specific skill and level for which you will be assessed.
2. Get acquainted with the requirements of the Competency Standards or Curriculum and **practise, practise, practise.**
3. **Log on to the NCTVET practice site at <https://nctvetpractice.heart-nta.org> and practice.**
4. List the facts that are essential to your skill area.
5. Check for weaknesses in your skill and knowledge and work on them.

6. Make sure you know the date of the assessment and your assessment centre.

### **The Day Before the Assessment**

1. **Get ready** – collect all the equipment you will need, for example, pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, or materials you need for your practical assessment.
2. **Do not cram** – last minute revision may confuse you. Have a relaxing day and a good night's sleep.
3. **Double-check** your timetable to ensure that you have the correct details of where and when the assessment will take place.

### **The Day of the Assessment**

1. Arrive at the assessment room early and try to relax.
2. Listen carefully to everything the invigilator says. He/She has important instructions to give to you.
3. If you do not understand the instructions, ask the invigilator to explain clearly.
4. Use all the time you are allotted – you will not get extra marks for finishing early and you may lose marks by rushing.
5. Pace yourself and plan your time.

## **HELPFUL TIPS ON WRITTEN AND PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT**

### **Written Assessment**

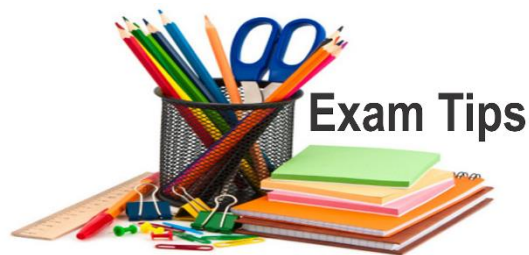
1. Make sure you write in all information requested *on the answer sheet* such as the skill area.
2. Read carefully and follow instructions carefully.
3. Make a quick calculation of how much time you can spend on each question – allow *time* for reading the questions, planning your answers, and checking them over.

### **Written Assessment (Multiple Choice)**

1. Use No. 2 pencil only.
2. Make solid marks that fill the circle completely.
3. Totally erase any marks you wish to change.
4. There is only **one correct answer** to each question.
5. Attempt ALL questions.
6. Be careful not to lose your place on the answer sheet.

### **Practical Assessment**

1. Make sure you are familiar with all the materials and equipment you will be expected to use.
2. Make sure you have everything you will need for the assessment and suitable clothing if necessary.
3. Before the assessment begins, if you do not understand what you are instructed to do, ask the examiner to clarify.
4. At the start of the assessment, plan your sequence of work using all your training and or experience.
5. Do not rush as you may make mistakes. The assessment has been designed to allow sufficient time for the tasks to be completed.
6. Avoid short cuts that could be regarded as bad practice.
7. Be safe, work within health and safety guidelines.



# ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

## General

1. You must be on time for **all** assessments. Arrive at least 15 minutes before each assessment.
2. If you arrive late for an assessment, report to the invigilator/examiner.
3. Present your *photo identification* to the invigilator/examiner at the start of the assessment.
4. You **must not** talk to other candidates once the assessment has started.
5. Listen to the invigilator/examiner and do what you are asked to do.

## Answer Sheets

1. Assessment questions must be answered **only** on the multiple-choice answer sheets, or any other materials provided.
2. Rough work must be done on paper provided. This must be handed in along with the multiple-choice answer sheets at the end of the assessment.

## Question Booklet

1. When instructed by the examiner, you should leaf through each page of the question booklet to ensure that you are given the right question paper and that all pages are included and properly printed.
2. Carefully read all instructions on the question paper.
3. The question booklet must not be marked. Make sure to hand them back to the examiner. **They must not be removed from the assessment room.**

## Materials

1. Do not take anything which you do not need, or which is not allowed in the assessment room. Leave them with the invigilator or in the area provided.
2. You must take to the assessment, your own pens, pencils, rubber, drawing/mathematical instruments, etc.



3. You are **not** allowed to borrow anything from another candidate during the assessment.
4. You will be informed about all the other materials you are required to have for the practical assessment at *least one month before the assessment*.

### **Conduct during the Assessment**

1. You should raise your hand if you have a problem, feel ill, need additional stationery or are in doubt about what you should do.
2. You will be disqualified from the assessment if you are found committing any of the following offences:
  - a. Copying from another candidate's paper
  - b. Giving assistance to another candidate
  - c. Using unauthorized materials
  - d. Communicating with another candidate
  - e. Engaging or committing any act which may be deemed as dishonest.
3. You must, always, respect the authority of the invigilator/examiner during the assessment regarding:
  - i. assessment commencement time
  - ii. assessment termination time
  - iii. conduct during the assessment
  - iv. settlement of candidate's enquiries, queries
4. Irregularities and misconduct of any kind may result in the cancellation of the paper(s) of the candidate(s) concerned or the entire assessment.

### **The End of the Assessment**

1. You must hand back to the examiner all completed answer sheet, question booklets, and rough work. No NCTVET assessment stationery must be taken from the assessment room.
2. You must not leave the assessment room until the invigilator/examiner tells you to do so.
3. Silence must be maintained even when you are leaving the assessment room.



## **CERTIFICATION**

### **Assessment Results**

The candidate will be notified via letter of his/her assessment results if he/she is recommended for certification and when to collect the certification of competence and Transcript.

### **Transcript**

A Transcript will be issued to all candidates after the assessment scripts have been processed. The Transcript will list the skill area and assessment components as well as the ratings achieved.

### **The NVQ-J and CVQ Certificates of Competence**

If you are successful in all the components of the assessment and have fulfilled all the requirements that is, achieving a rating of at least three (3), the NCTVET will award the National Vocational Qualification – Jamaica (NVQ-J) or *Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) depending on the award requested.*

Having a NVQ-J or CVQ Certificate of Competence means you have achieved an internationally recognized *award*. The Certificate is recognized nationally, in the Caribbean and in over 53 Commonwealth Countries.



### **The NVQ-J and CVQ:**

- Provide relevant qualifications that are internationally recognized
- Are proofs that you have attained a certain competence in a given set of work activities
- Will make you more employable
- Ensure that your pay/salary matches your ability and responsibility
- Will enable you to plan, progress and develop in your chosen career by moving from one level to another



## **OTHER DOCUMENTS AND SERVICES**

### **Appeal**

A candidate may request review of the assessment results if he/she is dissatisfied with the rating achieved or feels that an error may have been made during the processing of the results.

Request for review of the assessment results should be made in writing to the Registrar, NCTVET accompanied by the appropriate fee – within six (6) months of the official release of the assessment results. It should clearly indicate the name and registration number of the candidate, skill area and assessment date.

The NCTVET cannot guarantee that the findings of the review will be concluded before the next sitting of the assessment. Therefore, it is advised that if a candidate wishes to re-sit the assessment in the next sitting, he/she should apply with the appropriate fees pending the outcome of the review. If a change occurs in the candidate's results, then he/she may wish to withdraw the application.

The appeal fee is refundable only if the review results in an improvement in the candidate's score. The result of the review is final and no further requests for appeal will be facilitated.

### **Additional Transcript or Certificate**

A lost certificate or transcript can be replaced at an additional cost. Request for reprint of certificate and/or transcript should be made by completing the relevant form and paying the required fee.