Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Education

C.A.C.

CONTNUOUS ASSESSMENT COMPONENT (CAC) OF THE SEA

TEACHER'S MANUAL

Guidance for the Planning, Implementation, Assessment and Reporting of the CAC



2026

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Continuous Assessment Component (CAC) of the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA)
Teacher’s Manual
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About This Manual

Purpose of the Manual

The CAC Teacher's Manual provides common professional and classroom guidance for the consistent, fair and effective implementation of the Continuous Assessment Component (CAC).

It focuses on the teacher's role in:

- preparing for and facilitating CAC cognate tasks;
- supporting students appropriately while protecting independence and authenticity;
- assessing, scoring and maintaining required evidence and records; and
- implementing approved accommodations, participating in quality assurance and responding to assessment issues.

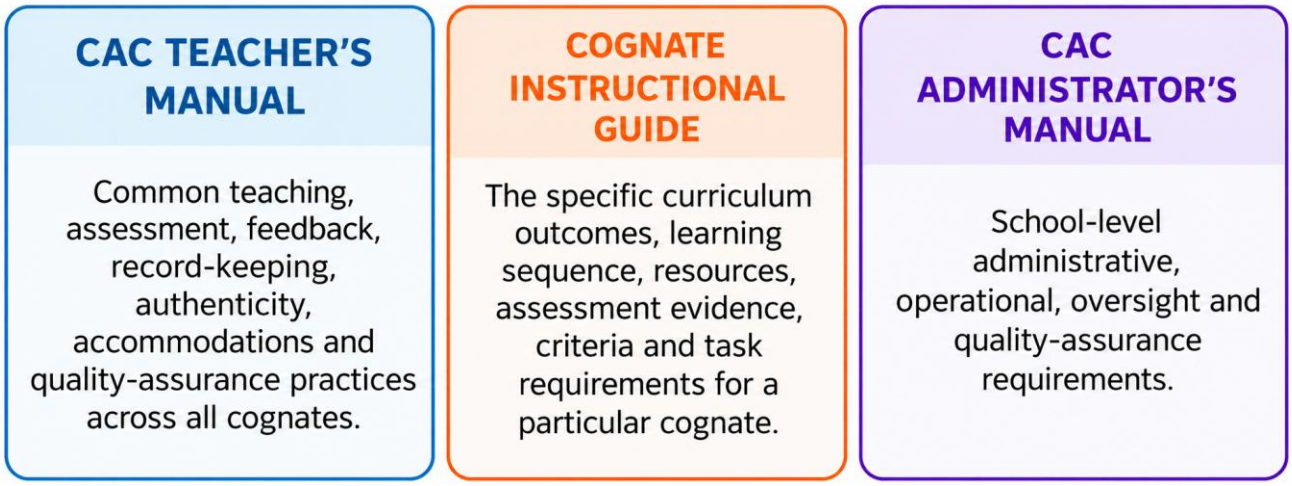
This manual applies across all CAC cognates.

For task-specific requirements, use the relevant Cognate Instructional Guide. For school-level administrative and operational requirements, use the CAC Administrator's Manual.

Who Should Use This Manual?

This manual is intended primarily for teachers implementing CAC cognate tasks. Other school personnel supporting classroom implementation may also use it to understand the common professional practices expected of teachers.

Which CAC Publication Should I Use?



How to Use This Manual

TEACHER ACTION: What you need to do in your classroom or assessment practice.
WATCH FOR: A common risk, misunderstanding or assessment boundary.
QUICK CHECK: A simple decision rule or reminder.
REFER TO: Where related or more detailed guidance is located.

CAC at a Glance

The Continuous Assessment Component of the SEA — the whole shape, in one page

1. HOW CAC AND THE WRITTEN SEA COMBINE (AT FULL IMPLEMENTATION)

CAC — 30%	Written SEA Examination — 70%

2. THE FOUR COGNATE GROUPS (STANDARDS 4–5)

1. **Physical Education and Life Skills**
   Personal Development and Well-being
2. **Visual and Performing Arts and ELA Writing**
   Creative Communication
3. **Agricultural Science and Science**
   Scientific Inquiry
4. **Mathematics and Digital Skills**
   Problem Solving and Innovation

3. THE PATHWAY ACROSS STANDARDS 3 TO 5

Standard 3
Preparation and sensitisation
No CAC mark contributes to SEA

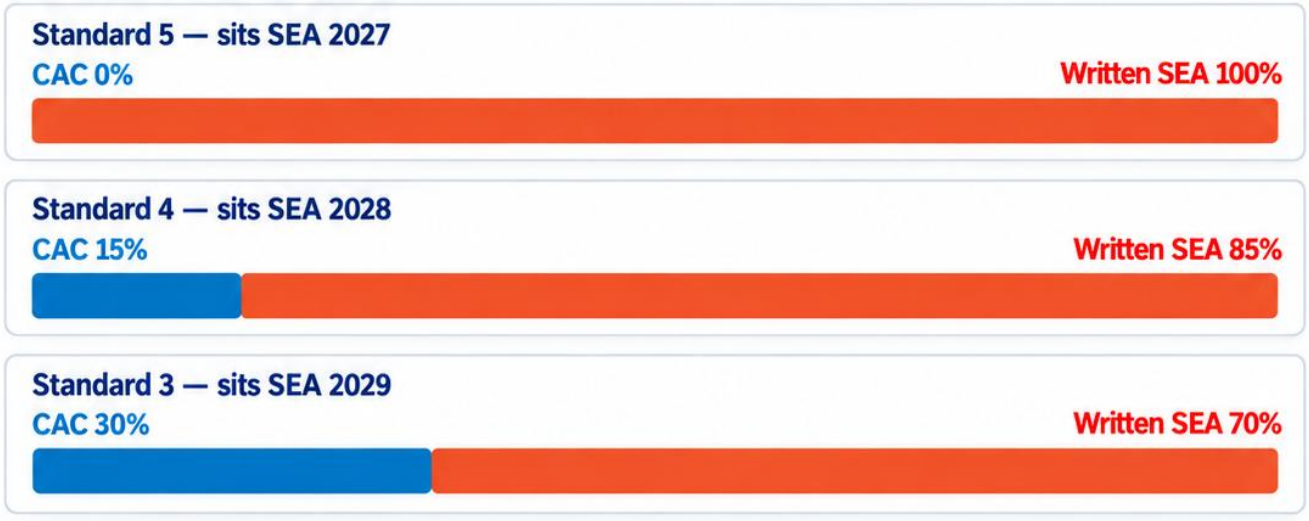
→

Standard 4
Cognates 1, 2 and 3 assessed
One per term

→

Standard 5
Cognate 4 (Term 1) + Written SEA (Term 2)

4. PHASED WEIGHTING/CAC CONTRIBUTION BY COHORT (CLASS IN SEPTEMBER 2026)



CAC Implementation: The Teacher's Role at a Glance

From Preparation to Assessment and Record-Keeping

1 Prepare for the Cognate Task

- Review the Cognate Instructional Guide and official task materials.
- Understand the task requirements, assessed outcomes and rubric.
- Ensure resources and approved accommodations are in place.
- Collaborate with other teachers of the level.

Section 2

2 Participate in Within-School Standardisation

- Participate in required within-school standardisation activities before task implementation.
- Develop a shared understanding of the Ministry-issued rubric and scoring criteria.
- Apply the rubric consistently and support subsequent verification activities.

Section 7

3 Teach and Facilitate Learning

- Teach the required knowledge and skills.
- Guide students through the CAC Task Cycle (Orientation, Exploration, Synthesising, Presentation and Reflection).
- Encourage inquiry, problem-solving, creativity and reflection.

Section 3

4 Use Formative Assessment/Feedback

- Monitor student progress throughout the task.
- Provide feedback to support learning within permitted boundaries.
- Identify and address learning needs early.

Section 4

5 Secure and Authenticate Assessment Evidence

- Ensure students produce the prescribed evidence.
- Confirm that the work is the student's own.
- Label and store evidence securely in accordance with Ministry requirements.

Section 6

6 Score Using the Ministry-Issued Rubric

- Assess only the prescribed evidence.
- Use the Ministry-issued rubric and scoring guidance.
- Record marks accurately and consistently.

Section 5

7 Secure Records and Report Issues

- Maintain required artefacts and records.
- Store materials securely until submission.
- Report and document any assessment issues or irregularities, and follow the required procedures.

Section 6
Section 8

Section 1: The Teacher's Role in the CAC

Teachers are responsible for the classroom implementation and initial assessment of CAC cognate tasks.

1.1 What Teachers Are Responsible For

- use the relevant Cognate Instructional Guide and official CAC assessment materials;
- teach the knowledge and skills required for the cognate task;
- facilitate inquiry, problem-solving, creativity and reflection;
- provide feedback within permitted boundaries;
- protect student independence and the authenticity of formal assessment evidence;
- assess only prescribed evidence using Ministry-issued criteria and rubrics;
- record CAC marks accurately;
- maintain required evidence and records;
- implement approved accommodations;
- participate in within-school standardisation and other required quality-assurance activities; and
- report assessment concerns or irregularities through the approved school process.

The principal retains overall responsibility for school-level CAC implementation and administrative compliance.

1.2 The CAC Cycle for Teachers



Figure 1: The CAC Cycle for Teachers

> **WATCH FOR**
>
> Do not independently change the prescribed task, assessment evidence, criteria, rubric or assessment conditions. Raise procedural concerns through the school's approved process.

Section 2: Preparing for a Cognate Task

Effective CAC implementation begins with a clear understanding of the specific cognate task, the learning students must develop, and the evidence that will be formally assessed.

2.1 Start with the Cognate Instructional Guide

Use the relevant Cognate Instructional Guide as the primary task-specific resource. Before teaching begins, use it to:

- understand the task context and focus;
- identify assessed outcomes, prescribed evidence, criteria and rubrics;
- plan teaching, learning, timing and task-specific strategies; and
- identify supporting resources and student materials.

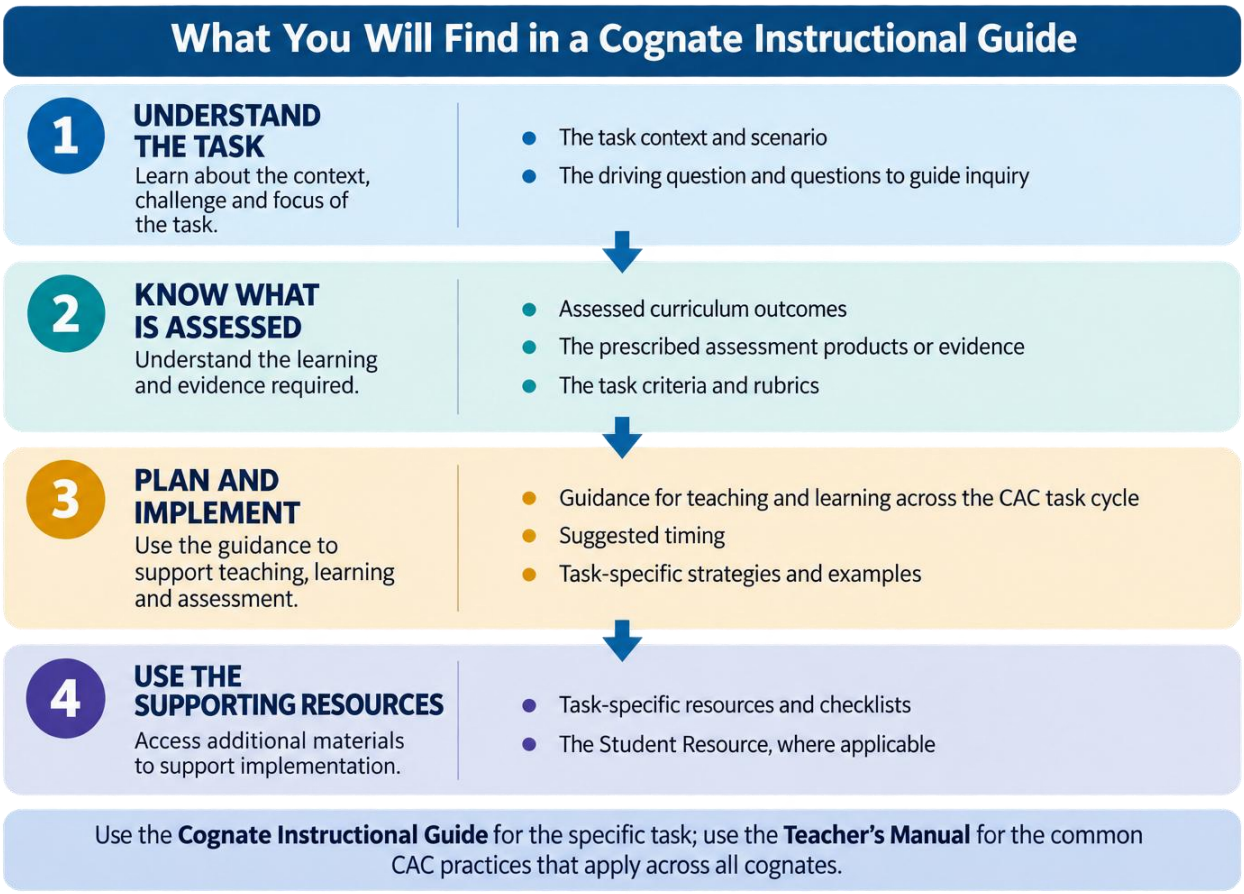


Figure 2: What You Will Find in a Cognate Instructional Guide

2.2 Understand What Will Be Assessed

Not everything students do during the cognate period is formally assessed. Be clear about the assessed outcomes, prescribed evidence, applicable criteria and rubric, assessment conditions, and any limits on feedback, revision or assistance.

WATCH FOR Do not treat every worksheet, draft, practice activity or classroom product as formal CAC assessment evidence.

2.3 Plan the Teaching and Learning

Plan the learning sequence so that students have sufficient opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills required for the task before formal assessment evidence is completed.

- teach the required knowledge, concepts and skills;
- provide opportunities for inquiry, investigation, practice and discussion;
- allow students to apply and connect learning;
- use formative assessment and feedback;
- build opportunities for reflection and independent improvement; and
- continue teaching in other curriculum areas during the cognate period.

2.4 Prepare Resources and the Learning Environment

Identify required Ministry-provided and ordinary classroom resources, organise appropriate spaces and equipment, confirm safety requirements, ensure equitable access, and confirm accessibility arrangements.

2.5 Confirm Student and School Arrangements

Confirm the school timeline, formal assessment period, approved accommodations, attendance or participation issues already identified, record and storage arrangements, and within-school standardisation arrangements where applicable.

Teacher Readiness Check

☐ I have read the Cognate Instructional Guide.
☐ I understand the outcomes.
☐ I know what will be formally assessed.
☐ I understand the rubric.
☐ I have planned the teaching and learning.
☐ Required resources are ready.
☐ I know the approved accommodations.
☐ I know the school timeline and deadlines.
☐ I understand the record and storage arrangements.
☐ I know whether standardisation applies.
☐ I have collaborated with my colleagues to ensure a common understanding of the task

REFER TO Relevant Cognate Instructional Guide and CAC Administrator's Manual, Sections 3-4.

Section 3: Teaching Through the CAC Task Cycle

CAC tasks follow a common four-phase cycle that supports inquiry, application, reflection and the development of assessment evidence. The Cognate Instructional Guide provides the task-specific learning sequence, activities and recommended timing.

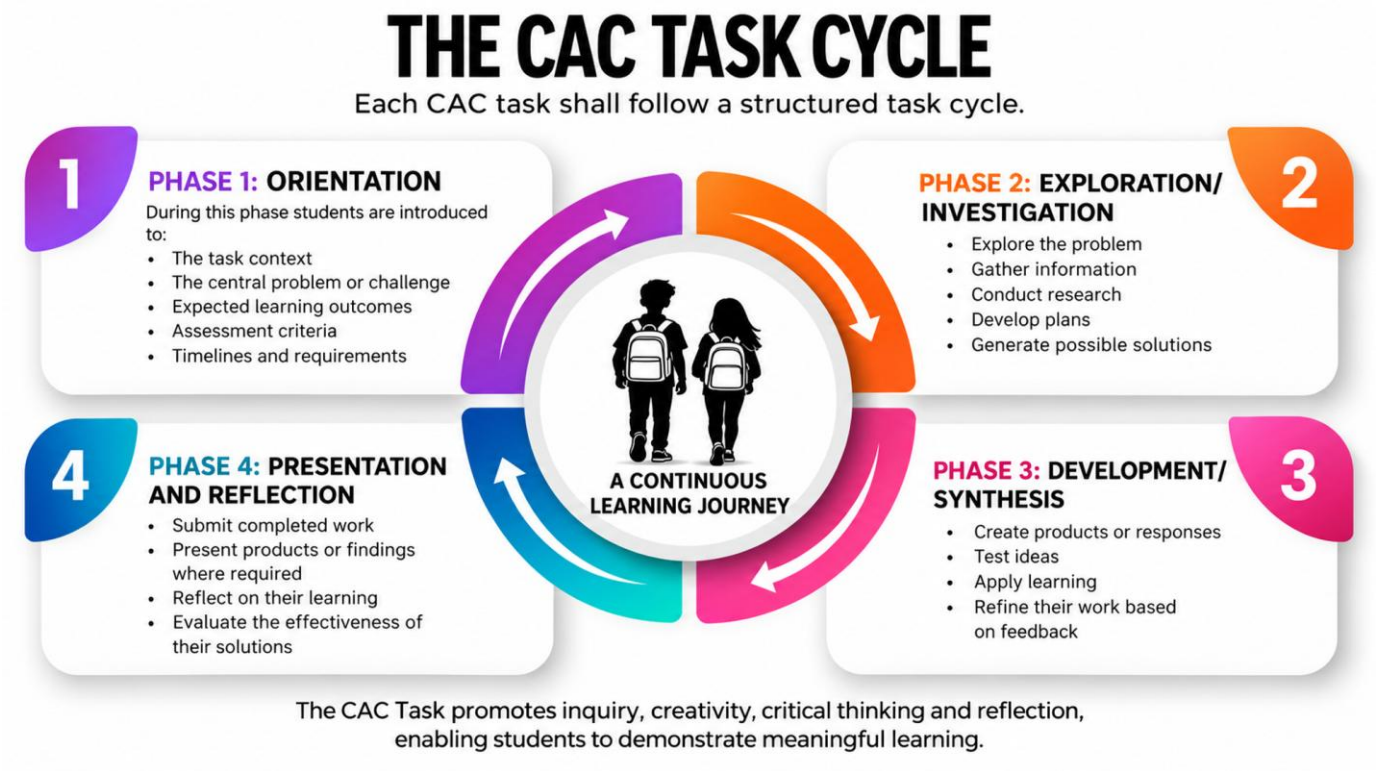


Figure 3: The CAC Task Cycle

The cycle is structured but iterative. Phases may overlap, and teachers and students may revisit earlier learning as understanding develops, evidence is gathered, ideas are refined and feedback is used. Formative assessment occurs throughout the task cycle.

> **IMPORTANT** The recommended timing for each phase is a planning guide. Follow the task-specific sequence and requirements in the relevant Cognate Instructional Guide.

Formative assessment occurs throughout the CAC task cycle and may include observation, questioning and discussion, review of student work, student explanations, reflection and self-assessment.

Formative feedback should be linked to the learning intention or criteria, identify strengths and next steps, prompt thinking, support independent improvement and remain within task-specific limits.

> **WATCH FOR** Formative assessment does not mean supplying the assessed answer, solution or product.

Section 4: Supporting Students Appropriately

Teachers are expected to provide instruction, questioning, feedback and other support that helps students learn and improve. Formal CAC assessment evidence, however, must represent the student's own knowledge, skills and achievement.

4.1 Facilitate Learning Without Over-directing

Teachers should teach the knowledge and skills students need:

- explain concepts and task requirements,
- ask questions that extend thinking,
- encourage students to justify decisions,
- provide opportunities for practice and revision during learning, and
- help students use criteria to improve independently.

Teachers should avoid leading students toward one predetermined answer, turning the task into a script, making decisions on behalf of students, correcting every weakness before students have the opportunity to think, or supplying content that will be formally assessed.

TEACHER ACTION Support the thinking process. Do not determine the assessed response.

Support vs Undue Assistance

4.2 Giving Formative Feedback

Appropriate feedback can draw attention to the learning intention or criteria, identify strengths, identify an area that requires further thought, prompt explanation or comparison, encourage review where revision is permitted, and direct the student back to the task requirements or rubric.

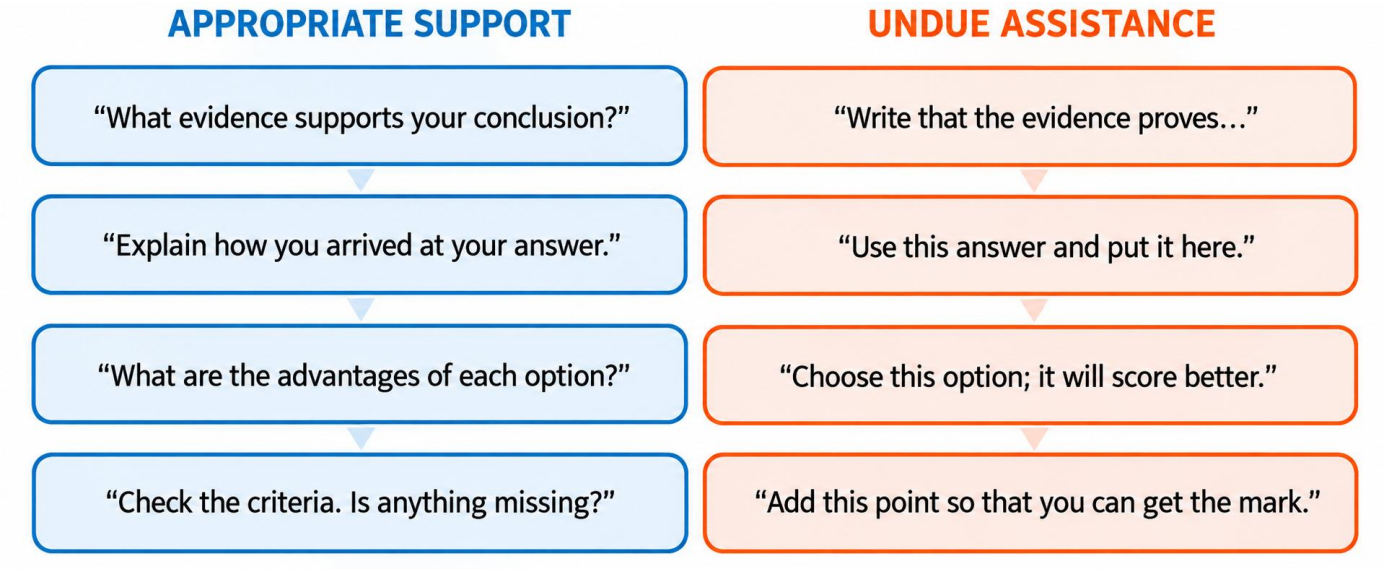


Figure 4: Appropriate Support and Undue Assistance

QUICK CHECK

If the support helps the student think, explain, review or improve independently, it may be appropriate. If it determines the content, solution or product submitted for assessment, it is undue assistance.

4.3 Protecting Student Independence and Authenticity

Observe students as work develops, keep formal assessment within the conditions specified for the task, monitor the level of assistance provided, ensure others do not complete or materially improve assessed work, retain required process evidence, and report authenticity concerns through the school's approved process.

WATCH FOR

Good teaching and formative support continue throughout the cognate period. The boundary is crossed when the teacher begins to determine the content of the assessed response.

Section 5: Assessing and Scoring Student Evidence

Formal CAC assessment is based only on the evidence identified for scoring in the relevant Cognate Instructional Guide and official assessment materials.

5.1 Assess Only the Prescribed Evidence

- assess only the prescribed evidence identified for formal scoring;
- use only the approved assessment criteria and Ministry-issued rubric(s);
- distinguish between formative work and formal assessment evidence; and
- do not introduce personally developed criteria into the CAC mark.

> **WATCH FOR**
>
> Do not score effort, behaviour, neatness or attractiveness, general teacher impression, or comparison with other students unless these are explicitly included in the rubric.

5.2 Use the Ministry-Issued Rubric

- judge the evidence against the rubric descriptors;
- base the judgement on the evidence presented;
- apply the criteria consistently;
- avoid comparing students with one another; and
- do not add, remove, re-weight or redefine criteria.

5.3 Record CAC Marks Accurately

- record marks promptly;
- ensure each mark matches the completed rubric;
- keep the completed rubric linked to the correct student and assessment evidence;
- correct recording errors through the school's approved process; and
- do not independently alter marks after verification or submission.

5.4 Feedback After Assessment

After scoring, students should receive feedback that relates to the assessment criteria, identifies demonstrated strengths and areas for further development, and supports subsequent teaching and learning.

WHAT WENT WELL Recognise demonstrated strengths.

WHAT NEEDS DEVELOPMENT Identify areas for further growth.

WHAT TO CARRY FORWARD Use the information to support future learning.

Section 6: CAC Artefacts and Teacher Records

Teachers are responsible for maintaining the evidence and records needed to support accurate scoring, authentication, verification and quality assurance.

6.1 What Counts as a CAC Artefact?

CAC artefacts are the prescribed assessment evidence associated with a student's cognate task. They may include written products, investigations, performances, practical products, designs, logs, reflections or other evidence identified in the relevant Cognate Instructional Guide. Supporting or process evidence may also need to be retained where required for authentication, verification or moderation.

> **IMPORTANT** CAC artefacts are not everything the student produces during the cognate period. Retain the formal assessment evidence and any supporting evidence specifically required.

6.2 Teacher Records That Must Be Maintained

Teaching and learning records: Keep current planning documents aligned with the cognate implementation period.

Student assessment evidence: Ensure evidence is clearly identified and linked to the correct student and task.

Completed rubrics and mark records: Complete accurately and keep available for verification and moderation.

Attendance / participation records: Maintain required records relating to student participation.

Accommodation / assistance records: Document approved accommodations and authorised assistance where required.

Standardisation records: Complete or contribute to records required by the school.

6.3 Label, Organise and Secure Evidence

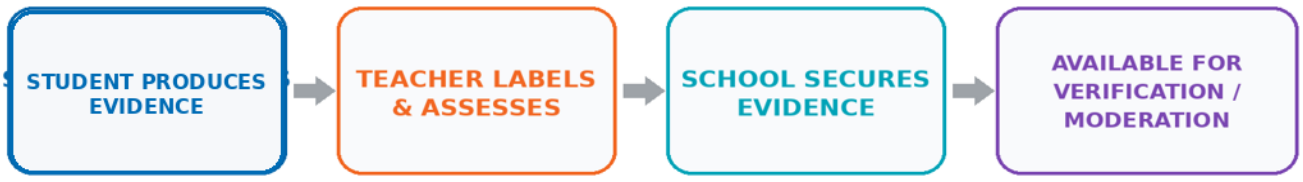


Figure 5: CAC Evidence Handling Process

WATCH FOR Do not delay reporting missing, damaged or incorrectly identified evidence in the hope that it can be corrected informally later.

6.4 Approved Accommodations and Authorised Assistance

DURING TEACHING	DURING FORMAL ASSESSMENT
Differentiate instruction to support access to learning.	Implement only approved accommodations.
Vary explanations, examples, grouping and practice opportunities.	Do not independently provide extra time, prompting, readers, scribes or other support.
Use scaffolds that build independence.	Ensure approved support does not supply the assessed response.
Raise emerging concerns through the school process.	Document authorised assistance where required.

TEACHER ACTION If an approved accommodation cannot be implemented as authorised, inform the principal and follow the approved process. Do not improvise an alternative.

Section 7: Quality Assurance - The Teacher's Role

Quality assurance helps ensure that CAC assessment decisions are fair, consistent, accurate and based on common national expectations.



Figure 6: Key CAC Quality-Assurance Processes

7.1 Within-School Standardisation

Where more than one teacher assesses students within the same school cohort, teachers must participate in within-school standardisation. This takes place before and after task implementation to support a shared understanding and consistent application of the Ministry-issued rubric.

Before Task Implementation

Teachers should:

- review the Ministry-issued rubric and assessment criteria together;
- discuss the interpretation of rubric descriptors and scoring expectations; and
- develop a shared understanding of the evidence required for assessment.

After Task Implementation

Teachers should:

- compare selected student assessment evidence;
- cross-mark selected samples where appropriate;
- discuss differences in scoring using the rubric and evidence;
- agree on consistent interpretations of the criteria;
- apply agreed interpretations consistently; and
- contribute to the required record of the standardisation activity.

> **WATCH FOR** Standardisation does not mean forcing identical marks. It means applying the same criteria and descriptors consistently.

7.2 Supporting School-Level Verification

Verification takes place after scoring and any required within-school standardisation. Its purpose is to confirm that marks and records are complete and accurate. It is not a second marking exercise.

- required assessment evidence is present;
- rubrics correspond with the correct students;
- recorded marks match completed rubrics;
- required records are complete;
- standardisation has been documented where applicable; and
- discrepancies are raised promptly.

> **QUICK CHECK** Standardisation = consistency of judgement. Verification = accuracy and completeness.

7.3 External Moderation: What Teachers Need to Know

Teachers are not responsible for managing the Ministry's moderation sampling or collection arrangements. This process will be managed by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). The teacher's role is to ensure that required assessment evidence, completed rubrics and supporting records are accurate, complete, clearly identified, securely maintained and available for the school's moderation arrangements.

> **REFER TO** CAC Administrator's Manual, Section 8, for the full quality-assurance arrangements.

Section 8: When Something Goes Wrong

Teachers should respond quickly to assessment issues, protect relevant evidence and records, and avoid creating their own assessment solutions.

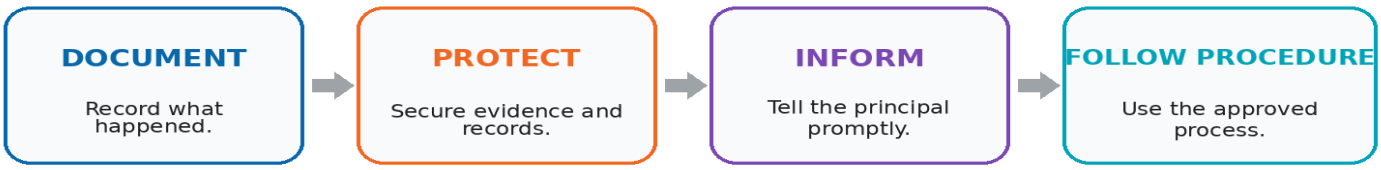


Figure 7: Teacher Response When an Assessment Issue Arises

8.1 Common Situations

Student misses a formal assessment requirement

Record the absence; inform the principal; protect any evidence already produced; do not independently arrange a make-up assessment or change the prescribed conditions.

Approved accommodation cannot be implemented

Pause the affected formal assessment where necessary; inform the principal; document what occurred; do not substitute an unapproved accommodation.

Assessment evidence is lost or damaged

Secure remaining evidence; document the circumstances; inform the principal; do not reconstruct evidence or estimate a mark independently.

Suspected copying or undue assistance

Protect the evidence; record the facts or observations; inform the principal; do not investigate or resolve the matter privately.

Restricted material may have been shared

Prevent further disclosure where possible; protect available materials and evidence; document what is known; inform the principal promptly.

Recording, ORS or other procedural problem

Preserve the original verified source records; document the issue; inform the appropriate school personnel; follow the approved escalation process.

> **WATCH FOR** Do not independently change the task, assessment date, conditions, evidence, rubric or mark in response to an unexpected problem.

Appendix A: Teacher CAC Cycle Checklist

BEFORE

☐ I have reviewed the relevant Cognate Instructional Guide and assessment materials.

☐ I have identified the assessed outcomes and prescribed evidence.

☐ I understand the rubric and assessment criteria.

☐ I have participated in preparatory within-school standardisation.

☐ I have planned the teaching and learning sequence.

☐ Required resources and spaces are ready.

☐ I know the approved accommodations and how they are to be implemented.

☐ I know the school timeline and internal deadlines.

☐ I understand the required records and storage arrangements.

☐ I have worked collaboratively.

DURING

☐ Required knowledge and skills are being taught.

☐ Inquiry, problem-solving and student thinking are being facilitated.

☐ Formative assessment and feedback remain within permitted boundaries.

☐ Attendance and participation are monitored.

☐ Assessment evidence and required records are being maintained.

☐ Student independence and authenticity are being protected.

AFTER

☐ Prescribed evidence has been scored using the official rubric.

☐ CAC marks have been recorded accurately.

☐ Within-school standardisation has been completed where required.

☐ The school verification process has been supported as directed.

☐ Completed rubrics, CAC artefacts and required records have been secured.

☐ Criterion-based feedback has been provided to students.

CAC Task Implementation: Teacher Quick Reference

BEFORE

- Read the relevant Cognate Instructional Guide.
- Know the assessed outcomes, evidence and rubric.
- Plan teaching, resources and accommodations.
- Check school timelines and record arrangements.

DURING

- Teach and facilitate inquiry.
- Use formative assessment throughout.
- Support thinking without supplying the assessed response.
- Monitor participation and attendance.
- Maintain required evidence and records.

ASSESSMENT

- Score only the prescribed evidence.
- Use only the Ministry-issued rubric.
- Judge against the criteria, not against other students.
- Record marks accurately.
- Standardise where required.

PROTECT

- Keep formal assessment evidence under school control.
- Match rubrics and records to the correct student.
- Secure CAC artefacts and records.
- Protect authenticity and confidentiality.

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG

- DOCUMENT → PROTECT → INFORM → FOLLOW PROCEDURE