

The iSkills Exam

An outcomes-based assessment, the *iSkills* assessment measures applied ICT literacy skills through a range of real-world tasks. This one-hour exam:

- features real-time, scenario-based tasks that measure an individual's ability to navigate, critically evaluate and understand the wealth of information available through digital technology
- helps you identify when further curriculum development is needed so students have the ICT literacy skills they need to succeed
- delivers individual and group data for use in student evaluation and placement, student ICT literacy assessment, curriculum development and deployment decisions and for accreditation and accountability initiatives
- tests the range of ICT literacy skills aligned with nationally recognized Association of Colleges & Research Libraries (ACRL) standards

For more information about the *iSkills* assessment visit <http://www.ets.org/iskills/about>.

Sample Exercise

Sample Assessment Task – ICT Proficiency

- Holistic assessment of ICT skills and knowledge
- Scenario presented along with a variety of tools (spreadsheet, word processor, etc.)

In this type of assessment, test takers would be evaluated solely on the end product they created (for example, a database, presentation, or document). Component skills would not be isolated and individually assessed. Instead, a scoring scheme would be developed which defined levels of performance and the criteria for reaching each level. This scheme would represent the collective judgments of experts in the field about what adults should know and be able to do in the ICT domain. Below is an example of what one task in a holistic assessment might look like. A complete assessment would include a number of different tasks that vary in difficulty and require a range of ICT knowledge and skills.

Opening Scenario (Community Context)

You've volunteered to create a flyer for a community clean-up day to be held in your neighborhood. Include the map below along with the following information and create an attractive one-page flyer for the event. The event will take place on Saturday, May 6th from 1:00 until 4:00. Volunteers are being asked to meet at Lincoln Square Park. Event organizers would like a tear-off registration slip to be included on the flyer where volunteers can print their name, address and phone number. The registration forms should be dropped off at the community center on Race Street by May 1st. [Map provided]

To complete this task, test takers would need to use a word processing program to create a flyer. The final product would be scored on the accuracy and completeness of the information it contained, (e.g., did the flyer include all the relevant information about dates and times, the amp and the tear-off registration form?). Additional scoring might include evaluating the layout and inclusion of graphic elements (borders, lines, etc.).

Fabbi, Gianoutsos, & Forgues. (2012). *Bridging the Information Literacy Gap: First-Year Students Reflect for Success*. Presented at the Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience: San Antonio, Texas.

iSkills Competencies Assessed

DEFINE	<p>Understand and articulate the scope of an information problem in order to facilitate the electronic search for information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- By distinguishing a clear, concise and topical research question from poorly framed questions, such as ones that are overly broad or do not otherwise fulfill the information need- By asking questions of a "professor" that help disambiguate a vague research assignment- By conducting effective preliminary information searches to help frame a research statement
ACCESS	<p>Collect and/or retrieve information in digital environments. Information sources might be web pages, databases, discussion groups, e-mail or online descriptions of print media. Tasks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Generating and combining search terms (keywords) to satisfy the requirements of a particular research task- Efficiently browsing one or more resources to locate pertinent information- Deciding what types of resources might yield the most useful information for a particular need
EVALUATE	<p>Judge whether information satisfies an information problem by determining authority, bias, timeliness, relevance and other aspects of materials. Tasks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Judging the relative usefulness of provided web pages and online journal articles- Evaluating whether a database contains appropriately current and pertinent information- Deciding the extent to which a collection of resources sufficiently covers a research area
MANAGE	<p>Organize information to help you or others find it later:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- By categorizing e-mails into appropriate folders based on a critical view of the e-mails' content- By arranging personnel information into an organizational chart- By sorting files, e-mails or database returns to clarify clusters of related information
INTEGRATE	<p>Interpret and represent information, using digital tools to synthesize, summarize, compare and contrast information from multiple sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- By comparing advertisements, e-mails or websites from competing vendors by summarizing information into a table- By incorporating information from different sources to conduct a scientific experiment and report the results- By placing results from an academic or sports tournament into a spreadsheet to clarify standings and decide the need for playoffs
CREATE	<p>Adapt, apply, design or construct information in digital environments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- By editing and formatting a document according to a set of editorial specifications- By creating a presentation slide to support a position on a controversial topic- By creating a data display to clarify the relationship between academic and economic variables
COMMUNICATE	<p>Disseminate information tailored to a particular audience in an effective digital format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- By formatting a document to make it more useful to a particular group- By transforming an e-mail into a succinct presentation to meet an audience's needs- By selecting and organizing slides for distinct presentations to different audiences- By designing a flyer to advertise to a distinct group of users

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