

## **Vocational Qualifications (QCF, NVQ, NQF)**

### **Administration (Business Professional)**

Level 1 Award Administration (Business Professional) – 03952

Level 1 Certificate Administration (Business Professional) – 03953

Level 2 Award Administration (Business Professional) – 03955

Level 2 Certificate Administration (Business Professional) – 03956

Level 2 Diploma Administration (Business Professional) – 03957

Level 3 Award Administration (Business Professional) – 03958

Level 3 Certificate Administration (Business Professional) – 03959

Level 3 Diploma Administration (Business Professional) – 03963

Level 4 Award Administration (Business Professional) – 03966

Level 4 Certificate Administration (Business Professional) – 03967

Level 4 Diploma Administration (Business Professional) – 03968

### **Moderators' report 2019 series**

## About this Moderators' report

This report on the 2019 series assessments aims to highlight:

- areas where students were more successful
- main areas where students may need additional support and some reflection
- points of advice for future examinations

It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

The report also includes links and brief information on:

- A reminder of our **post-results services** including **reviews of results**
- Link to **grade boundaries**
- **Further support that you can expect from OCR**, such as our CPD programme

## Reviews of results

If any of your students' results are not as expected you may wish to consider one of our reviews of results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#). If University places are at stake you may wish to consider priority service 2 reviews of marking which have an earlier deadline to ensure your reviews are processed in time for university applications: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/stage-5-post-results-services/enquiries-about-results/service-2-priority-service-2-2a-2b/>

## Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other assessments, can be found on the [OCR website](#).

## Further support from OCR

# CPD Training

Attend one of our popular CPD courses to hear exam feedback directly from a senior assessor or drop in to an online Q&A session.

Please find details for all our courses on the relevant subject page on our website.

[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

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## **Overview**

The Administration (Business Professional) suite of qualifications range from Level 1 to Level 4. There are three schemes at each level (Award, Certificate, Diploma) for Levels 2, 3 and 4 and two schemes (Award and Certificate) for Level 1.

The schemes have a spikey profile which means that the level of a particular scheme is set by the mandatory units but the optional units can be taken from different levels. So, for example, a Level 2 Award will consist of the two Level 2 mandatory units. The Certificate and Diploma schemes, in addition to the mandatory units will require the candidates to achieve a further 8 credits from the two groups of optional units for the Certificate and 27 credits for the Diploma.

There are also restrictions on the minimum number of Group A Units which must be taken and this affects the number of credits required from Group B. The data sheets, which can be found in the [Key Document](#) section of the website provides information on the number of credits required for each scheme and a list of the various units, credit ratings and their position in the mandatory, Group A or Group B sections. The [Centre Handbook](#), which is also found in the [Key Document](#) section, has a subsection (3.5) on barred combinations but these refer to text production, word processing and audio-transcription units which are no longer offered by OCR but which may be used by candidates who achieved them previously.

None of the mandatory units are available as optional units to other levels.

## **General comments**

The schemes are aimed at developing candidates' knowledge and practical skills in a range of administrative areas and roles and can be used to:

- develop candidates seeking a future in Business Administration
- aid those who already have experience to enhance their skills and understanding in order to progress further in their career or
- aid those hoping to return to work following a career break or illness.

It can be delivered in a classroom environment or a training office but there must be opportunities for candidates to carry out tasks such as handling mail and organising meetings in business like environment. Model assignments are available for each unit which centres may amend. Centres can also decide to use their own assignments but whether they make changes to existing model assignments or write their own, they must make sure that the candidate is able to carry out theoretical and practical activities as laid down in the unit specification for each unit.

The unit specifications include knowledge, understanding and skills which need to be achieved by the candidates and these are captured within the model assignments.

## **Comments on individual units**

### **Level 1:**

The two mandatory units for Level 1 are, Unit 1: Working in Business and Administration and Unit 2: Creating Business Documents. For the Award, these are the only two units that candidates are required to complete. For the Certificate a further three Level 1 and seven Level 2 units area available.

On the whole these mandatory units are well presented, with clear strong witness testimonies providing evidence of the candidate's approach, ability and success in carrying out a range of tasks, adhering to dress codes, etc which cannot be captured through written statements. The temptation for candidates to see leaflets as a way to demonstrate their expertise with Clip art rather than providing written guidance and demonstrating their knowledge and understanding all but disappeared from the evidence although the need to cite the source of their art work still remains a challenge for some centres. All assessors now understand that Unit 2 requires the written documents to be accurately laid out and all spelling, grammar and punctuation corrected before submission. There can be no allowance for English being a second language or other issues.

Unit 3: Welcoming Visitors relies very much on the quality of the witness testimony to confirm that candidates demonstrate the knowledge, understanding and skills required of anyone working in an organisation. The witness testimonies must be personalised to the individual candidate and generic witness testimonies are not acceptable. This is now well understood by experienced assessors who now provide a very good written image of what they have observed.

### **Level 2:**

The two mandatory units for this level are: Unit 6 Working in Administration and Unit 7 Written Business Communication. For the Award these are the only units. For the Certificate, these are supplemented by three Level 1 units, seven Level 2 units and eight Level 3 units from which the candidate may select in order to meet the minimum requirements of 18 credits. The Diploma requires a total of 37 units and so the remaining 27 units are drawn from three Level 1 units, seven Level 2 units and eight Level 3 units.

Unit 6: The set assignment requires candidates to produce a range of information sheets which cover the knowledge and understanding elements i.e. the role of the administrator, how the role of administrator relates to others in the business organisation, the importance of legislation which relates to the work of the administrator, Health and Safety issues, the importance of organising the work area. These are then used to cover other practical activities such as photocopying as outlined in the Knowledge, Understanding and Skills area of the unit specification, shredding, laminating, etc.

This unit is normally well presented but some centres still send multiple copies of single page photocopies when they could produce a witness testimony confirming that the single copy is an example and that the candidate has successfully produced multiple copies. Issues tend to arise when the work contains copies of uncited information from the Internet, although this is a much rarer occurrence in recent submissions.

Unit 7: Requires the candidate to read and review a detailed complaint, analyse it and provide a holding letter and a report on the content, the latter requiring recommendations. Again, assessors now grasp the need for accuracy in layout, spelling, grammar and punctuation. The occasions when work has to be withdrawn due to poorly written documents is rare. The written explanation of different forms of written communication and how these vary depending on

whether the customer is internal or external are of a standard expected at Level 2, although the referencing of sources of their information is not always provided. The holding letter can sometimes lean towards effusive apologies which could be construed as an admission of error by the firm and assessors should make sure that candidates recognise the importance of tone and content while trying to calm customers but avoid taking responsibility for everything that happens.

One of the optional units available is the Level 2 Unit 8, Career Planning, this is one of the units which provides excellent evidence, or the candidate fails as they do not understand what is meant by a career path. Rather than recognising that it is like a set of stepping stones from a junior to a very senior role in administration, they merely identify one or two roles in administration and believe that this will be sufficient. It is required candidates identify two possible career paths including their intermediate steps and identify what transferable skills can be transferred between both paths. Only by identifying two multi-step career paths can candidates achieve the ACs.

### **Level 3**

The two mandatory units are: Unit 15 Producing Complex Document and Unit 16 Understanding Functions and Roles within Business Organisations. In addition, for the Award a minimum of a further three credits are required, for the Certificate a further 8 credits and for the Diploma a minimum of 27 credits and these can be drawn from a range of optional units: seven at Level 2, eight at Level 3 and four at Level 4.

The model assignment is used almost exclusively by centres for Unit 15 and it requires the candidates to read a range of documents and provide detailed reports, a press release and a questionnaire. The analysis of the documents is usually well presented with a report providing the evidence. At this level all work must demonstrate a detailed understanding of the issue before going on to offer solutions or ways to mitigate the issue and this is usually achieved to a high standard.

Unit 16 is a unit which can cause issues if the assessor and candidate do not understand the depth of detail and analysis required for a Level 3 scheme. At Level 3, a critical comparison requires the candidate to identify all of the strengths and weaknesses, identify where and when these are particularly important. The candidate is expected to provide a conclusion which identifies when and where these similarities and differences between the business objectives of different types of organisation are relevant. The successful candidates have identified very different organisations to compare and also recognise the importance of citing the source of various images e.g. organisational charts.

One of the optional units for this level is Unit 17, the model assignment is normally used to gather the evidence. The explanation of a Job Analysis almost invariably refers to all the relevant elements of the Knowledge, Understanding and Skills column of the Unit Specification. The evidence is normally of a high standard with good clear explanations of what a Job Analysis is and the application of the analysis is used to design the new job description.

Overall, these are carried out to a good standard. New centre assessors can fail to appreciate the amount of detail required at Level 3. For example, using brief bullet points rather than detailed explanations of each element of a Job Analysis and supporting notes or other evidence to support the application of the findings to the creation of a new job description.

#### **Level 4**

This level is not as widely used as Level 2 and Level 3 but the work is usually of a very high standard.

There is only one mandatory unit, Unit 25 Working in a Senior Administrative Role. To achieve the Award, the seven additional credits must come from the optional unit groups. For the Certificate, the additional 15 credits must come from the same range of units as for the Award.

The Diploma has all four Level 4 units as mandatory units and the remainder of the 17 credits are drawn from the eight Level 3 units.

In addition to Unit 25, the candidate must complete: Unit 26 The Analyse Financial Information, Unit 27 Chair Business Meetings, Unit 28 Present Complex Business Information and Unit 29 Train and Develop Staff.

All of the Level 4 units require the candidate to undertake a real work or realistic working activity in order to achieve a pass. The candidates can provide evidence from activities in work place where the candidate is working at a level which provides the depth and range of activities required. If this option is not available then they may use a work placement or the centre may provide a realistic working environment which enables the candidate to fulfil a supervisory or senior administrative role.

Unit 25: The candidate is required to plan and prioritise workload for themselves and their staff and as such the candidate must have the opportunity to manage a team in a substantial task, in order to achieve the assessment criteria. The centres who offer this level of qualification are adept in providing either a placement or a realistic working environment. In the latter case, the candidate needs to take a lead for a significant period of time in order to have the necessary experience to carry out the requirements of the units.

Unit 26: The analysis of financial information requires the candidate to have a strong grasp of financial analysis and be able to carry this out over a period of time. The Knowledge, Understanding and Skills column shows that the candidate must understand technical financial languages, the various tools such as statistical analyses, the function and content of balance sheets and how to apply them. The successful candidates have the opportunity to gather and interpret the necessary evidence and apply the resulting knowledge effectively and efficiently. Additionally, they are able to interpret their finding and use a range of software tools to produce financial forecasts. The assessor must have a good knowledge of finance and accounting in order to make sure candidates have an appropriate role and a clear understanding of the processes required to produce accurate financial forecasts and carry out appropriate research.

Unit 27: Chair Meetings. Most centres use the model assignment but some have candidates who are already engaged in chairing meetings. The successful candidates have been provided with a realistic working environment and have a clerk or secretary to carry out the instructions of the Chair, which may be one of the candidates from the class. All stages are carried out and the witness testimony by the assessor or an experienced Chair, is very important in highlighting the behaviours and verbal interactions of the Chair with the clerk and those attending the meetings. It is also possible for this unit to be linked to Unit 19 (Support Business Meetings) so that the Level 4 candidate is the Chair and the Level 3 candidate takes the role of clerk. The important point is that the meeting is chaired and supported in a professional manner with correct language, dress code and environment. Additionally, the candidate is required to carry out an evaluation of their performance as Chair; they must consider positive and negative aspects of



their performance against good practice identified from experience or research and a final conclusion as the importance of their findings, what they have learned from the experience and how they improve their future chairing activities.

Unit 28: Present Complex Business Information. This requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding of how to prepare a presentation for an audience where the content is detailed and complex. The analyses which are successful include discussion of: the best layout, the format of the presentation, associated speaker notes as well as the purpose and objectives of the presentation. The candidate also demonstrates a clear understanding of their audience and how this will affect the language, timing and content of the presentation. The candidate should include copies of their notes and research as well as copies of the presentation, speaker notes and their questions for the audience to elicit feedback at the end of the presentation covering both oral questions and a short questionnaire. The assessor should provide a detailed witness testimony to provide evidence on the candidate's presentation skills. There is a model assignment for this unit and overall it is completed to a good standard. Weakness usually lies in the evaluation of their presentation. This may be due to a failure to provide a detailed discussion of the feedback and their own feelings on the good and poor aspects of the presentation but it is usually due to the failure to reach a conclusion, which is a requirement of evaluations.

### **Sector update**

The NVQ apprenticeships have been extended until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020, however, centres are expressing concerns over the fate of candidates who currently undertaken a mixture of training and practice in the NVQ methodology. The training provides practice through scenarios, realistic working environment and work places to develop the skills necessary to achieve the NVQ apprenticeships in Business and Administration.

The imminent removal of the NVQ standards have caused centres to look to Administration (Business Professional) as an alternative training tool for those candidates who need to develop skills and confidence before seeking work placements or real work opportunities. It allows candidates to develop their skills and knowledge from Entry Level qualifications such as administrative assistant to Office Manager, under controlled and supportive conditions.

Administration (Business Professional) schemes could fill this gap but it will require some negotiation with various regulatory and funding bodies. The Chief Moderator has already recommended that this option be reviewed.

## About OCR

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**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**The Triangle Building**  
**Shaftesbury Road**  
**Cambridge**  
**CB2 8EA**

### OCR Customer Contact Centre

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

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**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
Head office  
Telephone: 01223 552552  
Facsimile: 01223 552553

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