

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

### **Employability Skills**

Entry Level 3 Award Employability Skills - **10345**

Entry Level 3 Certificate Employability Skills - **10346**

Level 1 Award Employability Skills - **10347**

Level 1 Certificate Employability Skills - **10348**

Level 2 Award Employability Skills - **10349**

Level 2 Certificate Employability Skills - **10350**

## **OCR Report to Centres 2014 – 2015**

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates 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.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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# Entry Level 3, Level 1 and Level 2 Employability Skills - 10345-10350

## Overview:

This year has seen an improvement in the quality of work submitted for this qualification, particularly at Levels 1 and 2; however centres are also embracing the new Employability Skills qualification (10399–10404), which was launched in March 2015.

The majority of centres use the OCR–prepared evidence booklets to collect and record candidate evidence. The extended range of online resources has also helped centres to improve their candidate performance.

Good candidate performance is generally a result of good assessor performance; where candidate evidence is clearly marked, internal quality assurance performed and motivational comments offered the outcomes are usually of a very good standard.

Many centres take advantage of the spiky profile to enter candidates for a mix of Entry Level and Level 1 units. Level 2 entries often encompass one unit at Entry Level and the remaining units at Level 2. Candidates often find it difficult to reach the standard required for Level 2.

## General Comments

The Entry Level (10345/10346) and Level 1 (10347/10348) Awards and Certificates have continued to be the most popular. The work is generally of a good standard and a relatively low number of units are withdrawn. However Level 2 is less successful, with many candidates failing to produce the appropriate depth of response required at this level.

Areas of good practice across the 3 levels include: accuracy and attractive display of forms (Units 5, 12 and 17), business–like CVs (Units 5, 12 and 17) and a good understanding of UK state benefits (Units 2 and 10).

Areas of weakness include an unclear understanding of financial accounts (Units 10 and 15), the inability to differentiate between open and closed questions (Units 11 and 16) and a general failure to read the rubric of tasks prior to completion, thus failing to satisfy all related assessment criteria.

## Comments on Individual Units

Of the 7 Entry Level units, the most popular are Unit 1 (Assessing myself for work), Unit 4 (Researching and selecting a job opportunity), Unit 5 (Providing personal information for working life) and Unit 6 (Understanding health and safety in the workplace).

Unit 1 has a good success rate, with most candidates demonstrating a clear understanding of the skills and attributes needed for the workplace. The most demanding part of the unit is AC4.1 and AC4.2, where candidates sometimes have trouble producing an action plan with appropriate target dates and identified support. Unit 4 is also a successful unit; however some candidates have difficulty in correctly naming sources of information, such as website addresses (AC3.3). The production of the form and the CV required for Unit 5 (AC3.1 and AC3.2) has shown a significant improvement over the past year, with the majority now producing error–free documents. Unit 6 has provided greater challenges for candidates and there have been a

number of withdrawals, with candidates having difficulty in identifying workplace activities which are affected by health and safety regulations (AC1.3) and UK safety signs (AC2.1). The remainder of the unit, however, is usually well done, particularly AC1.2 and AC1.4.

There are 6 units at Level 1, the most popular being Unit 9 (Assessing myself for a job), Unit 11 (Planning for and learning from a job interview), Unit 12 (Providing personal information for the workplace) and Unit 13 (Preparing for and learning from a work placement). Many centres enter candidates for 3 units (an Award) rather than for 5 units (a Certificate).

In Unit 9, candidates often have difficulty in differentiating between a sector-specific skill and a transferable one and centre assessors clearly find this a tricky area to deliver effectively. ACs 1.3 and 1.4 are often poorly achieved. On the plus side, candidates have shown greater ability to differentiate between a skill and an attribute, and produce good coverage of ACs 2.1 and 2.2. Unit 11 is generally well prepared, with candidates producing some good reflection on their performance at interview (ACs 5.1 and 5.2). However, the use of open and closed questions and short and extended responses continues to be problematic for some candidates (ACs 3.1 and 3.2). The stumbling point in Unit 12 is often AC1.1 and 1.2, where the candidate is required to identify routine and non-routine workplace situations and the types of personal information that would be needed for each. Unit 13 has a very good success rate because candidates can use their actual work experience to inform their responses. A difficulty which sometimes arises in Unit 13 is when the work experience placement is unable (or unwilling) to provide appropriate workplace tasks for the candidates to complete.

Of the 5 Level 2 units, Unit 16 (Planning for and reflecting on a job interview), Unit 17 (Presenting personal information for the workplace) and Unit 18 (Planning for and reflecting on a work placement) are the most popular. The financial unit (Unit 15 – Learning to manage finance) is not at all popular, with centres preferring the Level 1 unit as being more achievable by their candidates.

Although there have been some examples of good practice at Level 2, there are a large number of withdrawals as candidates are unable to fulfil the demands of the units. There is much evidence of partial or superficial responses, lack of attention to detail and failure to research information for correct answers. Centre assessors must ensure that they do not accept incorrect or out-of-date responses as correct, resulting in disappointing results for candidates. However, resubmissions have a very high acceptance rate, which would indicate that candidates, with additional guidance, are capable of satisfying the assessment criteria in full.

## **Sector Update**

With the increasing criticism by employers of candidates' poor levels of literacy, it would be helpful if centre assessors could, as part of the marking process, advise their candidates on incorrect grammar, punctuation and spelling. The moderating team accept textual inaccuracies providing the meaning of the response is clear, but there is clearly room for improvement in this area.

This qualification (10345–10350) remains live until February 2016 (February 2017 for Level 2) but many centres have already transferred across to the new Employability Skills units (same number of units, similar evidence booklets, same eclaim system).

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