

Accredited

Business

GCSE 2012

Applied Business

Specification

J213 – Single Award

J226 – Double Award

Version 1

April 2012



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1.1 Overview of GCSE Applied Business and GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business

Single award

Unit A241: <i>Business in action</i>	Written paper 1 hour 30 mins – 80 marks 40% of the qualification Question paper: 4/5 questions Candidates answer all questions
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+

Unit A242: <i>Making your mark in business</i>	Controlled assessment Approx 45 hours – 60 marks 60% of the qualification Candidates will choose one business scenario from a list of five scenarios and then choose a local business on which to base their subsequent investigations
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Double Award

GCSE (Single Award) units:
Unit A241 (20%) and Unit A242 (30%)

+

Unit A243: <i>Working in business</i>	Written paper 1 hour 30 mins – 80 marks 20% of the qualification Question paper: 4/5 questions Candidates answer all questions
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+

Unit A244: <i>Business and you</i>	Controlled assessment Approx 45 hours – 60 marks 30% of the qualification Candidates will choose one job role from a list of five and investigate a range of human resource activities in relation to this role.
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1.2 Guided learning hours

GCSE Applied Business requires 120–140 guided learning hours in total.

GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business requires 240-280 guided learning hours in total.

1.3 Aims and learning outcomes

The aims of these specifications are to:

- encourage the candidate to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and to gain an insight into related sectors. They should prepare the candidate to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices
- raise awareness of cultural diversity.

The specifications must enable the candidate to:

- engage actively in the study of business and economics in order to develop as effective and independent candidates and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish facts and opinions, to build arguments and make informed judgements
- develop and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to contemporary issues in a range of local, national and global contexts
- appreciate the range of perspectives of different stakeholders in relation to business and economic activities
- consider the extent to which business and economic activity can be ethical and sustainable.

1.4 Prior learning

Candidates entering this course should have achieved a general educational level equivalent to National Curriculum Level 3, or an Entry 3 at Entry Level within the National Qualifications Framework.

2.1 Unit A241: *Business in action*

Businesses must never stand still. In today's world, businesses must constantly react to the internal and external environment in which they find themselves operating. With advances in technology and ever-increasing competition, businesses must constantly review and update their procedures to ensure they stay that one step ahead. This may mean taking risks or moving the business in an entirely new direction. The rewards can, however, be great.

In this unit, the candidate will investigate different types of businesses in action. The candidate will look at a series of business contexts to help them develop their knowledge and understanding of how businesses operate in today's world.

Although no indication is given of the number of businesses which need to be studied, it is important that businesses are selected which enable the candidate to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the unit content.

The candidate will investigate the different types of business ownership and look at the different activities businesses can be involved in and what makes someone want to start their own business. The candidate will need to consider the different types of functional areas that exist in any business and will learn about why businesses survive or fail.

The candidate will investigate the aims and objectives of businesses and why these are important. Businesses also have a number of stakeholders and the candidate will identify their particular interests in a business, looking at how they can influence a business and how it operates.

A key resource for any business is the people they employ. The candidate will investigate the dynamic relationship which exists between employer and employee, and how operating in enterprising ways can bring real benefits to businesses.

ICT is another important resource for any business. The candidate will investigate the impact of technology on business practice and how changes in ICT have changed the way in which a business develops.

Businesses are influenced by the uncertain environment in which they operate. The candidate will explore more fully the relationship between risk and reward that any aspiring business must consider, and look at how businesses operate and act with regard to the external environment. The candidate will need to investigate the impact of economic conditions on business practice.

By the end of this unit, through investigating a range of local and/or national business contexts, the candidate should feel they have gained a valuable insight into how businesses act and how they are often affected by changes in the internal and external environment.

2.1.1 Business type – forms of ownership

There are several different forms of business ownership

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify different forms of ownership – sole trader, partnership, private limited company, public limited company, franchise, voluntary/charitable/not for profit
- evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each form of ownership.

2.1.2 Business activity – why and how businesses start, succeed and/or fail

Businesses usually carry out a range of activities and are usually involved with producing goods, providing services or both.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify possible reasons why a business starts – e.g. to meet the needs of a particular target market, in response to an innovative idea
- identify types of activity a business may become involved in – e.g. manufacturing of goods (consumer and capital goods), retailing, provision of services (leisure, financial, communication)
- explain possible changes in the external environment that can impact on these activities – e.g. economic factors such as the level of consumer spending on different goods and services, new competitors entering the market
- evaluate the consequences of these changes in the external environment to business activity – e.g. success, failure.

2.1.3 Business organisation – how businesses organise themselves

Businesses will group key tasks together into departments/functional areas within their overall business structure. This enables a business to operate more efficiently and allows a business to develop discrete job roles.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- understand the following functional areas:
 - Finance
 - Human resources
 - Marketing
 - Operations
 - Administration/ICT
- understand key operational tasks associated with each functional area
- evaluate the consequences for a business if the functional areas do not operate efficiently.

Candidates may be asked to give an example of a business they have studied.

2.1.4 Framework for activity – aims, objectives and mission statements

For businesses to be successful, they must achieve the objectives (targets) and overall aims (goals) they set themselves. These can be summed up in the form of a mission statement.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify the main aims of businesses – e.g. making a profit, survival, growth, expansion, being competitive, being environmentally friendly
- explain the importance of business aims – e.g. gives businesses a framework to operate within, focus for business activity
- identify business objectives – e.g. selling more of a product than a competitor, providing more services than in the previous year
- explain the importance of business objectives – e.g. stepping stones in achieving an overall goal, setting of realistic targets for various departments
- explain the importance of a mission statement – e.g. gives businesses something to aspire to, sets out a vision for a business.

Candidates may be asked to give an example of a business they have studied.

2.1.5 Stakeholders – their differing interests

All businesses have stakeholders who take an interest in the decision-making process.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify different stakeholder groups in businesses – e.g. customers, suppliers, employees, employers, shareholders, local community
- explain different interests of stakeholder groups – e.g. suppliers: they sell goods/services to the business; financiers: they lend money and they want interest and repayment
- assess possible conflicts between different types of stakeholder groups – e.g. employees wanting a pay rise higher than employer is offering
- evaluate consequences to businesses of not listening to stakeholder groups - e.g. impact on reputation, drop in repeat business.

Candidates may be asked to give an example of a business they have studied which has a number of stakeholder groups. The candidate may need to:

- explain the interest of different stakeholder groups
- assess a conflict that has occurred between two different stakeholder groups
- evaluate the consequences to their chosen business of not listening to these stakeholder groups.

2.1.6 Employers/employees – how they operate in enterprising ways, develop their working relationships and meet their various rights and responsibilities

Today's workforce must be prepared to be more innovative and creative to stay ahead of potential competitors.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify how employees can assist businesses operating in an enterprising way – e.g. suggestion schemes, working on new projects, being flexible in terms of their job
- explain how businesses can be seen to operate in enterprising ways – e.g. taking risks, being innovative in how they operate (commerce, working practices)
- evaluate the possible benefits to businesses of operating in an enterprising way – e.g. increased market share, increased sales and profits, improved reputation.

Acting in an enterprising way is only one small part of the employee/employer relationship. In addition, the candidate must be able to:

- identify what employees expect from employers – e.g. suitable working conditions, contract of employment, equal opportunities, safe working conditions
- identify what employers expect from employees – e.g. punctuality, adherence to procedures, fulfilment of job role, complying with health and safety procedures
- explain the legal framework that employees/employers must operate within – e.g. The Employment Rights Act (1996 or as amended), The Equality Act (2010 or as amended)
- assess how employees and employers develop a good working relationship – e.g. meetings, appraisals, training, good communication, physical working environment and facilities, reward schemes such as employee of the month.

Candidates may be asked to give an example of a business they have studied.

2.1.7 Changing use of ICT – in business and economic activities

Businesses can help themselves become more efficient by using the latest advances in technology in both their business and economic activities.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify different types of ICT – e.g. personal computers and networks, spreadsheets, word-processing, databases, internet, e-commerce, email
- explain the purpose of ICT in business activities – e.g. to communicate, to produce spreadsheets to monitor stock levels, to record customer information
- explain the use of ICT in economic activities – e.g. e-commerce for online sales, accounting software
- evaluate the potential benefits/drawbacks of upgrading ICT provision to a business – e.g. labour-saving benefits, cost-saving benefits, training of employees, paperless office, growth of e-commerce.

Candidates may be asked to give an example of a business they have studied.

2.1.8 Uncertainty – risk, reward and change

The environment that businesses operate in is uncertain, challenging and dynamic. Businesses must often take risks, for example making changes to their business practices in order to be rewarded in the long term.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify possible reasons why the business environment is uncertain – e.g. changing customer demands, changes in the economy
- explain the ways in which businesses can change existing business practices in order to be successful – e.g. change of ownership, change of business activity
- evaluate the consequences to businesses of not making changes/taking risks – e.g. being left behind by competitors, losing market share.

Candidates may be asked to give an example of a business they have studied.

2.1.9 Business within society – ethics and sustainability

Apart from the legal framework within which businesses must operate, they also need to be mindful of their ethical responsibility and the need to be sustainable.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- explain the meaning of ethics
- explain the ways in which businesses can be seen to be operating in an ethical manner - e.g. producing goods that are fit for purpose, not exploiting workforce/child labour
- evaluate the consequences to businesses of not operating in an ethical manner – e.g. bad publicity, poor reputation
- explain the meaning of sustainability
- explain ways in which a business may act in order to achieve sustainability – e.g. agriculture, fossil fuels.

Candidates may be asked to give an example of a business they have studied and evaluate how it can be seen to be operating in an ethical manner.

2.1.10 Use of relevant terms, concepts and methods - to understand business and economic behaviour

However businesses manage their own activities, their success will depend on conditions in the economy as a whole. These conditions can affect businesses and how they behave.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify and describe a number of economic factors – e.g. interest rates, inflation, exchange rates
- evaluate the possible impact of changes in such economic factors (both up and down) on business behaviour - e.g. an increase in interest rates means increased costs
- assess how businesses can react to such changes in economic factors – e.g. an increase in interest rates may mean that a business has to look at saving money in other areas of the business.

2.2 Unit A242: Making your mark in business

Being successful is a key aim for all businesses. Staying one step ahead of competitors and listening to the target market are two key ingredients if a business is to survive and grow.

In this unit, the candidate will be asked to carry out a range of activities which will enable them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the needs of a particular target market before producing an item of promotional material to meet those needs and ultimately making their chosen business more successful.

The candidate will need to develop knowledge and understanding of the importance of customer needs and competitors. The candidate will need to consider the actions that businesses take in order to identify and respond to the needs of certain target markets and the actions of competitors. The candidate will also need to understand the role of research in identifying the needs of target markets and the features of the market within which a business operates. The candidate will need to understand the marketing mix and how parts of the mix can be combined to enable a business to respond to the needs of its target market and gain a competitive advantage over its rivals.

The candidate will develop skills in designing and conducting market research and then, using the information collected, suggest ideas for how the business could better meet the needs of its target market and be more successful than its competitors. The candidate will also go on to produce an item of promotional material.

Through their learning experience in this unit, the candidate will also have the opportunity to develop a series of vocationally-related skills, from developing and reviewing an action plan, to reflecting on progress made, to commenting on new skills acquired.

Building on the knowledge and understanding developed in Unit A241 and the new skills developed in this unit, the candidate will now have the opportunity to apply some of their knowledge and understanding in practice and make a mark in the business world.

The following sections contain the knowledge, understanding and skills which the candidate will need to acquire before choosing a scenario and researching their chosen business context.

2.2.1 Getting organised

The candidate will need to be familiar with action plan templates and must understand that although there are many different types of action plan, to be effective, it must contain the following key sections:

- identification of actions
- explanation of how actions will be completed and by whom
- time allocation for completion of actions.

The candidate will need to be able to create and then update their own personalised action plan during the course of this unit.

Through their learning experience in this unit, the candidate will also have the opportunity to develop a series of vocationally-related skills, from developing and reviewing an action plan, to reflecting on progress made, to commenting on new skills acquired.

Building on the knowledge and understanding developed in Unit A241 and the new skills developed in this unit, the candidate will have the opportunity to apply some of their knowledge and understanding in practice and make a mark in the business world.

The following sections contain the knowledge, understanding and skills which the candidate will need to acquire before choosing a scenario and researching their chosen business context.

2.2.2 Understanding the market

The candidate will need to understand:

- different forms of research to assist in analysing a particular market
- that primary or field research which they will carry out in a group could involve interviews, surveys, observation or questionnaires
- that secondary or desk research is research using information provided by someone else, which may involve obtaining information from newspapers, magazines and the internet.

2.2.3 Customers and competitors

The candidate will need to develop their knowledge and understanding of customers and competitors.

Customers

The candidate will need to understand:

- different types of customers, and different groups of customers, known as market segments, have different needs, and be able to identify the needs of a particular target market and respond to their particular customer needs
- the main sources of customer power which include their purchasing power and their ability to choose to purchase from a number of competitors
- the factors that are important to customers when considering whether to make a purchase, including price, quality, value for money, pre- and after-sales service and the fulfilment of relevant consumer protection legislation by suppliers
- the main methods used by business organisations to monitor levels of customer satisfaction, including surveys, mystery shoppers and the amount of repeat custom
- how good and poor customer satisfaction can have an impact on a business, including impact on revenue, profits, market share and even long-term survival.

Competitors

The candidate will need to understand:

- the methods which can be used to monitor the impact of competitors, including market data, surveys and monitoring the actions of actual and potential competitors
- the actions businesses can use to remain competitive, including pricing strategies, promotional activities, the places where products are sold and the need to be innovative and creative
- the consequences to a business of not being aware of competitor activity and not taking appropriate action.

2.2.4 Presenting data effectively

The candidate will need to be able to present their research outcomes effectively and will therefore need to understand effective forms of presentation, which may include written reports, short summaries, graphs, tables, charts, etc.

2.2.5 The marketing mix/promoting an idea

The candidate will need to understand the main principles of marketing and its importance for business. This will require the candidate to understand the marketing mix, or 4Ps:

- Product – how the product can be modified to better meet the needs of customers.
- Price – consider different strategies a business could use.
- Place – how the business gets its product/services to the customer.
- Promotion – strategies that a business can use to promote its products/services.

When suggesting how a business could better meet the needs of a particular target group, the candidate will need to understand that certain parts of the mix can be combined to ensure customer needs are met.

In this unit, the candidate must pay particular attention to promotional activity. The candidate will need to understand the reasons why a business promotes particular products and services.

The candidate must also be familiar with different forms of promotional activity, including leaflets, posters, advertisements, story boards and radio jingles.

The candidate will be expected to produce an item of promotional material to meet the needs of a particular target market. The candidate will also need to make a case for why a particular type of promotional material is being used and why it meets the needs of a particular target market.

2.2.6 Costing implications

Although not anticipated to be a key focus of this unit, the candidate must still be able to consider the types of cost involved in producing certain types of promotional material.

Whilst candidates are not expected to produce financial data, they are still expected to have an understanding of scale, potential audience and resource implications for certain types of promotional campaign, for example considering the implications of a national advertising campaign on television versus a leaflet drop in the local area.

2.2.7 Reflection and review

The candidate will need to develop their analytical and evaluative skills during the course of the unit to prepare for the controlled assessment self-evaluation tasks.

The candidate will need to be able to reflect on their own performance in the unit, as well as reflecting on the contribution of other members of the group.

2.2.8 Sourcing work

The candidate will need to know how to reference sources of information and compile a bibliography.

2.3 Unit A243: *Working in business*

In Units A241 and A242, the candidate gained a valuable insight into a variety of businesses in action. The candidate investigated how businesses are set up and owned, who has an interest in them and how both the internal and external environment can affect business activity. The candidate went on to investigate a business of their choice and how to make it more successful in a particular context.

The aim of this unit is to build on the knowledge and understanding in Unit A241 and investigate, in more detail, the internal functions of businesses. The candidate will learn in more detail about different levels in those areas.

The candidate will be asked during the course of the examination to carry out a series of 'in-tray exercises', taking responsibility for certain duties and tasks which would be required of a particular employee working in a particular functional area.

The candidate will benefit from a practical approach to this unit in order to provide them with the skills they will require, should they go on to further study or straight into the world of work.

Please note:

- the finance functional area will always be covered in each examination paper; other functional areas will be included as appropriate
- the candidate will be answering questions in the examination paper from a number of different perspectives
- the human resources functional area has not been included within this unit as it will form the basis of Unit A244 and the candidate's subsequent investigations.

2.3.1 Business structure – how businesses organise themselves

As businesses grow, they need to organise themselves and what they do. This helps businesses, as a whole, to make decisions and carry them out. Every business has its own way of structuring what it does and the functional areas that it needs.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify the different ways businesses can organise themselves – e.g. flat, hierarchical, matrix, by function, by geographical location
- explain the main features of each type of business organisational structure
- explain how these types of business organisational structures can affect the different functional areas of a business.

2.3.2 Job roles – key activities and responsibilities

Businesses employ people to work at different levels.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify the different level of job roles which exist within a business – e.g. chief executive, chairman, directors, managers, supervisors and operatives
- explain key tasks and activities typically associated with each particular type of job role
- evaluate types of skills, qualifications and personal qualities required for each particular type of job role.

2.3.3 Forms of communication

One of the key factors of a good working relationship between functional areas is the way in which they communicate and work together.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify and explain different forms of oral communication – e.g. telephones, meetings
- identify and explain different forms of written communication – e.g. memos, letters, notices, newsletters, reports
- identify and explain different forms of ICT communication – e.g. email, PowerPoint presentations, video-conferencing websites
- evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each of these communication methods and consider which would be the most appropriate form of communication in a given situation.

2.3.4 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: finance

In this section, the candidate will be investigating some of the tasks associated with working in the finance functional area. The candidate must understand how the finance functional area will work together with other functional areas to ensure key business activities are completed.

The practical 'in-tray' element

The candidate may be asked to:

- complete a sequence showing the documents involved when businesses buy or sell goods or services
- complete a range of these documents
- complete financial documents including profit and loss statements, cash-flow forecasts and balance sheets
- construct a break-even chart from given data.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify different methods by which employees can be paid – e.g. cash, cheques, bank transfers, Banks Automated Clearing System (BACS)
- explain the difference between gross and net pay and the deductions that are commonly made from gross pay
- understand the layout of a payslip and be able to calculate gross and net pay from a given set of details (the calculation of tax payable from income tax will not be assessed)
- identify the purpose and sequence of each document involved when businesses buy or sell goods or services – e.g. purchase orders, delivery notes, goods-received notes, invoices, credit notes, statements of account, remittance advice slips, payment methods (e.g. cash, cheques, debit/credit card, BACS), receipts, petty cash voucher
- explain the procedures involved in making these payments – e.g. filling out the cash vouchers, cheques, getting authorisation from appropriate personnel
- explain the time delay in some of these payment methods; understand how to complete each of the above documents accurately
- evaluate the importance of checking documents for errors and the implications of businesses not completing each document accurately
- understand how to complete a profit and loss statement; calculate profit/loss; evaluate the effects that an increase or decrease in selling price, fixed costs and variable costs could have on the gross profit figure and net profit figure
- understand how to complete a balance sheet; evaluate the impact of a balance sheet on a business
- assess how a cash-flow forecast can help businesses in the decision-making process
- understand how to complete a cash-flow forecast
- interpret a cash-flow forecast and evaluate possible problems
- evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using ICT to prepare financial statements, such as cash-flow forecasts and profit and loss statements
- calculate the point at which a business activity breaks even using a break-even chart or formula
- understand how to construct and use a break-even chart to estimate the likely profitability of a business activity and to help make decisions about changing costs or revenues
- evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using ICT to construct a break-even chart.

2.3.5 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: marketing and sales

In this section, the candidate will be demonstrating knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the marketing and sales functional area. The candidate must understand how the marketing and sales functional area will work together with other functional areas to ensure key business activities are completed.

The practical 'in-tray' element

The candidate may be asked to:

- suggest the most appropriate form of research for a given context
- comment on a particular form of market research, suggesting improvements
- from a given context, read an inaccurate advertisement and correct mistakes
- put a series of tasks in a correct sequence
- select the best version of an advertisement and justify selection
- from company information, select appropriate highlights for a press release/promotion and justify details and best method of promotion
- analyse data concerning past promotions and resulting sales levels, comment on trends and draw conclusions.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The candidate will need to be able to:

- explain the purpose of market research
- identify different types of primary (field) market research
- identify different types of secondary (desk) market research
- analyse and evaluate market research data
- suggest the most appropriate method of market research in a given context and explain associated benefits to a business
- evaluate how the results of market research can improve future performance in a business
- identify and explain the different ways businesses can promote goods and services – e.g. television, radio, newspapers, sales promotions
- evaluate the advantages and disadvantages and scrutinise different methods of promotion; suggest the most appropriate method of promotion in a given context
- explain the key features of The Trade Descriptions Act (1968 or as amended) and the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)
- analyse trends in promotional data concerning past promotions and resulting sales levels.

2.3.6 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: administration and ICT

In this section, the candidate will be demonstrating knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the administration and ICT functional area. The candidate must understand how the administration and ICT functional area will work together with other functional areas to ensure key business activities are completed.

The practical 'in-tray' element

The candidate may be asked to:

- comment on or compose a formal letter in response to a given context
- comment on or compose an email in response to a given context
- comment on or compose a memorandum in response to a given context
- comment on or compose a telephone message in response to a given context
- assess scenarios in relation to welcoming visitors to businesses – e.g. what would the employees need to consider – dress code, body language, manner and approach, etc
- assess improvements to a visitor information fact sheet
- check records from a given context to ensure they are accurate
- evaluate how a record-keeping system could work in a given context.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify and explain the roles and responsibilities of someone working in this functional area – e.g. recording and distributing messages, organising meetings, responding to queries
- produce spreadsheets, update databases
- understand how to construct a simple letter, email, memorandum, or telephone message based on a given context
- assess what procedures are needed when welcoming visitors to a business
- assess the contents of a visitor information fact sheet
- check records accurately and evaluate record-keeping systems
- evaluate the impact of the changing use of ICT on the working of this functional area.

2.3.7 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: customer service

In this section, the candidate will be demonstrating knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the customer service functional area. The candidate must understand how the customer service functional area will work together with other functional areas to ensure key business activities are completed.

The practical 'in-tray' element

The candidate may be asked to:

- comment on how customer service could be improved in a given context
- suggest how a particular customer complaint could be dealt with once provided with a particular context
- respond to telephone calls or emails about enquiries or complaints
- suggest examples of customer service that could meet the needs of a particular scenario
- use data to examine records of customer satisfaction surveys, analyse and suggest improvements
- evaluate emergency procedures in relation to a given context.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify and explain the reasons why businesses need to keep their customers happy – e.g. gain customer satisfaction, win and keep customers, improve the reputation of the business
- identify and explain a range of customer services – e.g. providing information, giving advice, seating areas, delivering goods, handling complaints
- suggest examples of the type of information and advice that could be provided
- understand how to write a message, including a letter or email in response to a customer enquiry/complaint
- explain emergency procedures that would be put in place in businesses
- evaluate how customer service could be improved in businesses
- evaluate the consequences to businesses of ineffective customer service
- analyse customer service data.

2.3.8 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: production

In this unit, the candidate will be demonstrating knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the production functional area. The candidate must understand how the production functional area will work together with other functional areas to ensure key business activities are completed.

The practical 'in-tray' element

The candidate may be asked to:

- suggest the most appropriate method of production in a given context
- make an informed choice on the design of a new product to meet the needs of a target market based on research provided – e.g. choose between three methods and justify choice.

Knowledge and understanding

The candidate will need to be able to:

- identify and explain the different methods of production – e.g. flow, job, batch and cell
- evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each production method
- evaluate the impact of advancing technology on production methods.

2.4 Unit A244: *Business and you*

Without doubt, one of the key ingredients for any business to be successful is its workforce. Without enthusiastic, motivated employees, businesses may never be able to realise their true potential. When recruiting new staff, businesses must take extra care to ensure that the right people are appointed to particular posts through a carefully considered recruitment and selection process.

In this unit, the candidate will gain a valuable insight into the recruitment and selection process from a number of different perspectives. To begin with, the candidate must select and then apply for one of the advertised posts in the controlled assessment material. The candidate will produce application documents in response to the advertised job role. The candidate will investigate and consider a number of key issues related to the recruitment and selection process.

The candidate will then be asked to produce an induction programme for new employees for their chosen context. This must contain information such as health and safety, rights and responsibilities, employee welfare and customer service.

Finally, candidates will imagine that they have been in their chosen job role for a number of years. They are now looking for a promotion and will, therefore, be asked to investigate the skills required for a more supervisory position. The candidate will need to prepare a training programme to develop the knowledge and skills to be successful.

This unit is an excellent opportunity for candidates to start to think about the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in the workplace. They will come to realise, by the end of the unit, that employees are an important part of any business. Without them, businesses cannot function.

The following sections contain the knowledge, understanding and skills which the candidate will need to acquire before choosing a scenario and researching their chosen business context.

2.4.1 The human resources functional area

The human resources functional area is responsible for the needs of all employers/employees of a business. The candidate will need to understand that although employers/employees must take some responsibility for their own welfare at work, the human resources functional area has overall responsibility to ensure that procedures and best practice are in place.

The candidate will need to understand the main activities of the human resources functional area, which include:

- employing and maintaining staff
- ensuring employees are trained as necessary in accordance with job role and business procedures
- ensuring the business follows procedures, laws and legislation
- providing a safe working environment.

2.4.2 The recruitment process

The candidate will need to understand that when applying for any vacant job role in a business, applicants are required to complete particular recruitment documents in order to be considered for the job role.

The candidate will need to be able to:

- research various application documents, such as application forms, CVs and letters of application
- produce and complete these recruitment documents
- understand and evaluate the importance of completing these documents accurately, clearly, to a high standard and taking into account the legal framework.

2.4.3 The selection process

The candidate will need to understand that the selection process is vitally important to businesses to ensure they recruit the right people. The candidate will need to develop their understanding of some of the key features of any selection process. These include understanding:

- the shortlisting process – why and how applicants are shortlisted, e.g. against the requirements of the person/job specification
- the interview process – appropriateness of interview questions, test, presentation, role of interview panel, overview of advertised post
- what makes an effective interview from the perspective of employee and employer
- legislation/laws that have to be adhered to during the selection process
- various ways applicants are informed of interview outcome, e.g. successful/unsuccessful, written/verbal and opportunity for feedback.

2.4.4 Human resources legislation

The candidate will need to understand that businesses recruit and select staff using a variety of different methods. Whichever method is used, the candidate will need to understand that businesses have to be mindful of the legislation that is in place when recruiting and selecting new staff. The candidate will need to understand how the following types of legislation protect employees and employers and be able to evaluate the implications of such legislation for the recruitment and selection process:

- Employment Rights Act (1996 or as amended)
- Equality Act (2010 or as amended)
- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974 or as amended).

The candidate must have an overview of the key aspects of the legislation above.

2.4.5 Induction

The candidate will need to understand that it is in the interest of businesses to keep staff turnover low and to maintain good, motivated employees. In this section, the candidate will need to:

- understand that the purpose of any induction plan is, for example, to help settle new employees into a new job role
- understand the contents of an effective induction programme including:
 - business background/history
 - tour of building
 - a copy of the businesses health and safety procedure and security policy
 - working hours/breaks
 - rights and responsibilities as an employee
 - details of what on-the-job training will be given.

2.4.6 Promotion – training, skills, competencies required

The candidate will need to understand that it is important for businesses to recognise potential in existing employees and to encourage them to improve on their professional development, which may, one day, lead them to promotion.

The candidate will need to understand:

- what skills and competencies are required for a promotion
- what the job entails, day-to-day activities and why/how these are different to other job roles
- additional training involved
- different types of training programmes and their key features
- types of costs involved in these training programmes and the time impact for businesses.

2.4.7 Effective research

The candidate will need to understand different forms of research to assist in understanding key aspects of the recruitment and selection process. The candidate will need to understand that the primary or field research which they will carry out could involve interviews or observation.

The candidate will need to understand that secondary or desk research is research using information provided by someone else, which may involve obtaining information from newspapers, magazines and the internet.

3.1 Overview of the assessment in GCSE Applied Business

For GCSE Applied Business candidates must take units A241 and A242.

GCSE Applied Business J213

Unit A241: *Business in action*

40% of the total GCSE

1 hour 30 mins written paper

80 marks

This question paper has four/five questions.

Candidates answer **all** questions.

This unit is externally assessed.

Unit A242: *Making your mark in business*

60% of the total GCSE

Controlled assessment

Approx 45 hours

60 marks

Candidates choose **one** business scenario from a list of five scenarios and then choose a local business on which to base their subsequent investigations.

Candidates complete **all** tasks.

This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

3.2 Overview of the assessment in GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business

For GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business candidates must take all four units.

GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business J226

GCSE units, Unit A241 being 20% and Unit A242 being 30% of the total GCSE (Double Award)

Unit A243: *Working in Business*

20% of the total GCSE (Double Award)

1 hour 30 mins written paper

80 marks

This question paper has four/five questions.

Candidates answer **all** questions.

This unit is externally assessed.

Unit A244: *Business and you*

30% of the total GCSE (Double Award)

Controlled assessment

Approx 45 hours

60 marks

Candidates choose **one** job role from a list of five and investigate a range of human resource activities in relation to this role.

Candidates complete **all** tasks.

This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

3.3 Assessment Objectives (AOs)

Candidates are expected to demonstrate their ability to:

AO1	recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology
AO2	apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks
AO3	analyse and evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present appropriate conclusions.

3.3.1 AO weightings – GCSE Applied Business

Unit	% of GCSE			Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	
Unit A241: <i>Businesses in action</i>	18%	16%	6%	40%
Unit A242: <i>Making your mark in business</i>	16%	24%	20%	60%
Total	34%	40%	26%	100%

3.3.2 AO weightings – GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business

The relationship between the units and the assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment is shown in the following grid:

Unit	% of GCSE			Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	
Unit A241: <i>Businesses in action</i>	9%	8%	3%	20%
Unit A242: <i>Making your mark in business</i>	8%	12%	10%	30%
Unit A243: <i>Working in business</i>	9%	8%	3%	20%
Unit A244: <i>Business and you</i>	8%	12%	10%	30%
Total	34%	40%	26%	100%

3.4 Grading and awarding grades

Both GCSE and GCSE (Double Award) results are awarded on the scale A* to G (A*A* to GG). Units are awarded a* to g. Grades are indicated on certificates. However, results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (G, GG or g) will be recorded as *unclassified* (U, UU or u) and this is **not** certificated.

Most GCSEs are unitised schemes. When working out candidates' overall grades OCR needs to be able to compare performance on the same unit in different series when different grade boundaries may have been set, and between different units. OCR uses a Uniform Mark Scale to enable this to be done.

A candidate's uniform mark for each unit is calculated from the candidate's raw mark on that unit. The raw mark boundary marks are converted to the equivalent uniform mark boundary. Marks between grade boundaries are converted on a pro rata basis.

When unit results are issued, the candidate's unit grade and uniform mark are given. The uniform mark is shown out of the maximum uniform mark for the unit, e.g. 41/80.

The specifications are graded on a Uniform Mark Scale. The uniform mark thresholds for each of the assessments are shown below:

(GCSE) Unit Weighting	Maximum Unit Uniform Mark	Unit Grade								
		a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	u
60/30%	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0
40/20%	80	72	64	56	48	40	32	24	16	0

A candidate's uniform marks for each unit are aggregated and grades for the specifications are generated on the following scale:

Qualification	Max Uniform Mark	Qualification Grade								
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
GCSE	200	180	160	140	120	100	80	60	40	0

Qualification	Max Uniform Mark	Qualification Grade															
		A*A*	A*A	AA	AB	BB	BC	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE	EF	FF	FG	GG	UU
GCSE (Double Award)	400	360	340	320	300	280	260	240	220	200	180	160	140	120	100	80	0

The written papers will have a total weighting of 40% and controlled assessment a weighting of 60%.

A candidate's uniform mark for each paper will be combined with the uniform mark(s) for the controlled assessment(s) to give a total uniform mark for the specifications. The candidate's grade will be determined by the total uniform mark.

3.5 Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the assessment may be balanced by better performance in others.

The grade descriptors have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

3.5.1 Grade F

Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of some basic aspects of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They communicate their ideas using everyday language. They use some basic business terminology.

They carry out straightforward investigations and tasks using a limited range of skills. They apply some knowledge and understanding to select and organise basic information from a limited range of sources to investigate business organisations.

They identify some evidence to analyse problems and issues and make judgements. They present simple conclusions that are sometimes supported by evidence.

3.5.2 Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They use business terminology appropriately.

They plan and carry out investigations and tasks using a range of skills appropriately. They apply their knowledge and understanding to select and organise relevant information from a variety of sources to investigate business organisations in different contexts.

They use and evaluate evidence to analyse problems and issues with some accuracy, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions that are supported by evidence.

3.5.3 Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They understand and use business terminology accurately and appropriately.

They plan and carry out effectively a range of investigations and tasks using a wide range of skills competently. They apply their knowledge and critical understanding effectively to select and organise information from a wide range of sources, and to investigate business organisations in a variety of contexts.

They use and evaluate quantitative and qualitative evidence effectively with a high degree of accuracy to analyse problems and issues, and make informed and reasoned judgements to present reasoned and substantiated conclusions.

3.6 Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is assessed in all units and is integrated in the marking criteria.

Candidates are expected to:

- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear
- present information in a form that suits its purpose
- use a suitable structure and style of writing.

In internally assessed units, A242 and A244, criteria for assessing quality of written communication will appear in the marking criteria for controlled assessments. It will be embedded in the marking criteria for a number of assessment objectives for each unit.

In externally assessed units, A241 and A243, quality of written communication will be embedded in a number of level-response questions containing each of the three assessment objectives. The questions which carry quality of written communication will be the ones that are considered most appropriate and will change series on series. The criteria for assessing quality of written communication will be embedded in each of the level responses in the mark scheme.

4 Controlled assessment in GCSE Applied Business

This section provides general guidance on controlled assessment: what controlled assessment tasks are, when and how they are available; how to plan and manage controlled assessment and what controls must be applied throughout the process. More support can be found on the [OCR Website](#).

Teaching and Learning

Controlled assessment is designed to be an integral part of teaching and learning. Activities which develop skills take place regularly in the classroom, using a variety of appropriate resources (as chosen by the teacher). These opportunities allow candidates to practice a wide range of tasks, and teachers can discuss and comment on performance as appropriate. There are no restrictions regarding time or feedback to individual learners.

When all necessary teaching and learning has taken place and teachers feel that candidates are ready for assessment, candidates can be given the appropriate controlled assessment task.

4.1 Controlled assessment tasks

All controlled assessment tasks are set by OCR.

Unit A242 – The candidate must choose one business scenario from a list of five and then choose a local business on which to base their subsequent investigations. The series of tasks which the candidate must complete are supplied by OCR. It should be noted that the types of business scenario have been chosen to be as wide ranging as possible to suit all centre requirements.

Unit A244 – The candidate must choose one job role from a list of five and investigate a range of human resource activities in relation to this role. The series of tasks which the candidate must complete are supplied by OCR. It should be noted that the types of job roles have been chosen to be as wide ranging as possible to suit all centre requirements.

Live OCR controlled assessment material must **NOT** be used as practice material. Centres should devise their own practice material or use the specimen controlled assessment material.

Controlled assessment tasks will be available on Interchange from 1 June for certification in the following academic year and will be reviewed every two years. Guidance on how to access controlled assessment tasks from Interchange is available on the [OCR Website](#).

Centres must ensure that candidates undertake a task applicable to the correct year of the examination by checking carefully the examination dates of the tasks on Interchange.

4.2 Planning and managing controlled assessment

Controlled assessment tasks are available at an early stage to allow planning time. It is anticipated that candidates will spend a total of about 45 hours in producing the work for each unit. Candidates should be allowed sufficient time to complete the tasks.

Suggested steps and timings are included below, with guidance on regulatory controls at each step of the process. Teachers must ensure that the control requirements indicated below are met throughout the process.

4.2.1 Preparation and research time

Preparation (informal supervision) – see note

Informal supervision ensures that the work of the individual candidates is recorded accurately and that plagiarism does not take place. Assessable outcomes may be informed by group work, but must be an individual response.

- Introduction to the task (teacher led)

Includes choice of tasks, possible approaches and sources of evidence, time allocations, programmes of work and deadlines, methods of working, control requirements.

Research (limited supervision)

Limited supervision means that candidates can undertake this part of the process without direct teacher supervision and outside the centre as required. For A242 each candidate must carry out both individual and group research. For A244 candidates may work collaboratively during this stage. However, when producing their final piece of work for both units, candidates must complete and/or evidence all work individually.

- Research/collection of evidence: **30 hours for each unit**

During the research phase candidates can be given support and guidance.

Teachers **can**:

- explain the task
- advise on how the task could be approached
- advise on resources
- alert the candidate to key things that must be included in the final piece of work.

Teachers **must not**:

- comment on or correct the work
- practise the task with the candidates
- provide templates, model answers or feedback on drafts.

Research material can include fieldwork, internet- or paper-based research, questionnaires, audio and video files etc. Candidates must be guided on the use of information from other sources to ensure that confidentiality and intellectual property rights are maintained at all times. It is essential that any material directly used from a source is appropriately and rigorously referenced.

4.2.2 Producing the final piece of work

Producing the final piece of work (formal supervision)

- Writing up: **15 hours for each unit**

Formal supervision means under direct teacher supervision: teachers must be able to authenticate the work and there must be acknowledgement and referencing of any sources used. If writing up is carried out over several sessions, work must be collected in between sessions.

When supervising tasks, teachers are expected to:

- exercise continuing supervision of work in order to monitor progress and to prevent plagiarism
- exercise continuing supervision of practical work to ensure essential compliance with health and safety requirements
- ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the specification requirements and can be assessed in accordance with the specified marking criteria and procedures.

Candidates must work independently to produce their own final piece of work.

4.2.3 Presentation of the final piece of work

Candidates must observe the following procedures when producing their final piece of work for the controlled assessment tasks.

- tables, graphs and spreadsheets may be produced using appropriate ICT. These should be inserted into the report at the appropriate place
- any copied material must be suitably acknowledged
- quotations must be clearly marked and a reference provided wherever possible
- work submitted for moderation or marking must be marked with the:
 - centre number
 - centre name
 - candidate number
 - candidate name
 - unit code and title
 - assignment title.

Work submitted in digital format (CD or online) for moderation or marking must be in a suitable file structure as detailed in the Appendix at the end of these specifications. Work submitted on paper should be secured by treasury tags.

4.3 Marking and moderating controlled assessment

All controlled assessment units are marked by the centre assessor(s) using OCR marking criteria and guidance and are moderated by the OCR-appointed moderator. External moderation is either e-moderation where evidence in a digital format is supplied or postal moderation.

4.3.1 Applying the marking criteria

The starting point for marking the tasks is the marking criteria (see section 4.3.4 *Marking criteria for controlled assessment tasks* below). The criteria identify levels of performance for the skills, knowledge and understanding that the candidate is required to demonstrate. Before the start of the course, and for use at INSET training events, OCR will provide exemplification through real or simulated candidate work which will help to clarify the level of achievement the assessors should be looking for when awarding marks.

4.3.2 Use of 'best fit' approach to marking criteria

The assessment task(s) for each unit should be marked by teachers according to the given marking criteria within the relevant unit using a 'best fit' approach. For each of the assessment objectives/ criteria, teachers select one of the three band descriptors provided in the marking grid that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked.

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The award of marks **must be** directly related to the marking criteria.

Teachers use their professional judgement in selecting the band descriptor that best describes the work of the candidate.

To select the most appropriate mark within the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the candidate's work *convincingly* meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- where the candidate's work *adequately* meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the candidate's work *just* meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

Teachers should use the full range of marks available to them and award *full* marks in any band for work which fully meets that descriptor. This is work which is 'the best one could expect from candidates working at that level'. Where there are only two marks within a band the choice will be between work which, in most respects, meets the statement and work which just meets the statement. For wider mark bands the marks on either side of the middle mark(s) for 'adequately met' should be used where the standard is lower or higher than 'adequate' but **not** the highest or lowest mark in the band.

Only one mark per assessment objective/criteria will be entered. The final mark for the candidate for each controlled assessment unit is out of a total of 60 and is found by totalling the marks for each of the (mini) tasks.

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced. If a candidate submits no work for the internally assessed units, then the candidate should be indicated as being absent from that unit. If a candidate completes any work at all for an internally assessed unit, then the work should be assessed according to the marking criteria and the appropriate mark awarded, which may be zero.

4.3.3 Annotation of candidates' work

Each piece of internally assessed work should show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria.

The writing of comments on candidates' work, and coversheet, provides a means of communication between teachers during the internal standardisation and with the moderator if the work forms part of the moderation sample.

4.3.4 Marking criteria for controlled assessment tasks

Unit A242: Making your mark in business

TASK 1				
Assessment objective	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL
AO2	The action plan includes the appropriate basic information but is limited in scope. No clear indication of how the action plan will help the candidate to set about carrying out the investigations required to obtain information on target market needs and competitor activity in relation to the business scenario. 1–2 marks	The action plan is sound and helps the candidate to set about carrying out the investigations required to obtain information on target market needs and competitor activity in relation to the business scenario. 3–4 marks	The action plan is comprehensive and fit for purpose and is clearly targeted to obtaining information on target market needs and competitor activity in relation to the business scenario. High levels of application with clear evidence that changes have been made to action plan as the investigation has progressed with clear reasoning given. 5–6 marks	6

0 marks = no evidence submitted or work submitted does not address assessment objective.

TASK 3

Assessment objective	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL
A01	Limited identification of ways in which business is meeting current customer needs. Summary lacks clarity and does not demonstrate a real awareness of issues involved. Ideas for taking the business forward are weak and underdeveloped with no real understanding of marketing mix. 1–4 marks	Good description of ways in which business is meeting current customer needs. Summary shows depth of understanding and sound awareness of issues involved. Ideas for taking the business forward are sound and are linked closely to marketing mix. 5–8 marks	Clear, concise description of ways in which business is meeting current customer needs. Summary shows breadth and depth of understanding and real awareness of issues involved. Ideas for taking the business forward are realistic, coherent and will have real impact on target market due to comprehensive understanding of marketing mix. 9–12 marks	12
A02*	Limited attempt to summarise results of research. Particular focus may be on either customers or competitors or focus is weak on both. Presentation of data is weak, contains errors and shows up limited effectiveness of market research. Quality of written communication demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of correct terminology. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be noticeable and intrusive. 1–3 marks	Sound attempt to summarise results of research. Coverage is sound of both customers and competitors. Data is presented soundly and contains only a few errors. Market research on the whole effective. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity and coherence with appropriate use of correct terminology. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling but these are not intrusive. 4–6 marks	Excellent summary of research results. Detailed coverage of both customers and competitors. Data presented in a variety of ways and is extremely effective. Minimal errors in data that is presented with market research clearly targeted. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate and correct terminology. There are few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. 7–9 marks	9

0 marks = no evidence submitted or work submitted does not address assessment objective.

* = This assessment objective includes assessment of quality of written communication.

TASK 4

Assessment objective	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL
AO1	Identification of the reasons why it is important for businesses to promote. 1–2 marks	Comprehensive description of reasons why it is important for businesses to promote. 3–4 marks		4
AO2	The item of promotional material includes the appropriate basic information but is very limited in scope. 1–3 marks	The item of promotional material is sound. It has been given some careful thought and links to target market are evident. 4–6 marks	The item of promotional material is fit for purpose and is particularly targeted to research outcomes and target market. 7–9 marks	9
AO3*	Limited attempt to show why item promotional material was chosen. No real comment on why promotional material might attract target market as needs of market not understood. Types of cost are not thought of and underdeveloped. Quality of written communication demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of correct terminology. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be noticeable and intrusive. 1–3 marks	A sound attempt to analyse and consider appropriateness of chosen item of promotional material. Sound analysis and some initial judgement of why promotional material will attract target market. Sound understanding of types of cost involved in producing promotional material. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity and coherence with appropriate use of correct terminology. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling but these are not intrusive. 4–6 marks	A coherent and in-depth evaluation provided of appropriateness of the chosen item of promotional material. Excellent justification of why promotional material will attract target market as needs of market clearly understood. Types of cost involved in producing item of promotional material discussed effectively and coherently. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate and correct terminology. There are few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. 7–10 marks	10

0 marks = no evidence submitted or work submitted does not address assessment objective.

* = This assessment objective includes assessment of quality of written communication.

TASK 5				
Assessment objective	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL
A03*	Limited attempt to identify skills gained. Weak commentary on own contribution and reflection on other group members contribution with no real reference to action plan. Quality of written communication demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of correct terminology. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be noticeable and intrusive. 1–3 marks	Sound analysis shown with some valid judgements when reflecting on skills gained. Sound analysis and some judgements made on own contribution and reflection on other group members, contribution with sound links to action plan. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity and coherence with appropriate use of correct terminology. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling but these are not intrusive. 4–6 marks	Comprehensive analysis and judgement shown when reflecting on skills gained. Excellent, in-depth evaluation on own contribution and reflection on other group members contribution with strong and regular links to action plan. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate and correct terminology. There are few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. 7–10 marks	10

0 marks = no evidence submitted or work submitted does not address assessment objective.

* = This assessment objective includes assessment of quality of written communication.

Unit A244: Business and you

TASK 2				
Assessment objective	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL
AO1	Identification and limited description of main activities of the human resources functional area. 1–3 marks	Thorough description of main activities of the human resources functional area. 4–6 marks		6
AO2	The application documents may contain basic generic information but does not meet specific needs of chosen job role. 1–3 marks	The application documents are sound and meet the needs of the chosen job role. 4–6 marks	The application documents are extremely focused and targeted on meeting needs of chosen job role. 7–9 marks	9
AO3*	No real attempt to evaluate why completed application documents are fit for purpose. Evidence is weak and underdeveloped. Quality of written communication demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of correct terminology. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be noticeable and intrusive. 1–2 marks	Sound attempt to evaluate why completed application documents are fit for purpose. Evidence shows sound analysis and some initial judgement shown of why application pack will be successful. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity and coherence with appropriate use of correct terminology. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling but these are not intrusive. 3–4 marks	A coherent and in-depth evaluation of why application documents are fit for purpose. Evidence shows strong levels of analysis and judgement of why application pack will be successful. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate and correct terminology. There are few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. 5–7 marks	7

0 marks = no evidence submitted or work submitted does not address assessment objective.

* = This assessment objective includes assessment of quality of written communication.

TASK 3

Assessment objective	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL
AO1	Identification and limited description of what makes an effective interview process – may only consider employee or employer perspective. 1–3 marks	Thorough description of what makes an effective interview process – both employee and employer perspectives included. 4–6 marks		6
AO2	The interview questions may contain basic generic information and do not meet the specific needs of the chosen job role. No real explanation is provided. 1–3 marks	The interview questions are mainly aimed at the chosen job role. Sound explanation of why questions have been chosen. 4–6 marks	The interview questions are extremely focused and targeted on the chosen job role. Detailed explanation of why questions have been chosen. 7–9 marks	9
AO3*	No real attempt to evaluate how legislation will impact on recruitment/selection process for chosen job role. Evidence is weak and underdeveloped. Quality of written communication demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of correct terminology. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be noticeable and intrusive. 1–2 marks	Sound analysis with some attempt to make valid judgements on how legislation will impact on recruitment/selection process for chosen job role. These judgements are linked to effectiveness and for the most part are realistic. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity and coherence with appropriate use of correct terminology. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling but these are not intrusive. 3–4 marks	A coherent and in-depth evaluation of how legislation will impact on recruitment/selection process for chosen job role. Evidence shows strong levels of analysis and judgement. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate and correct terminology. There are few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. 5–7 marks	7

0 marks = no evidence submitted or work submitted does not address assessment objective.

* = This assessment objective includes assessment of quality of written communication.

TASK 4

Assessment objective	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL
AO1	Knowledge of induction programme is limited. Programme lacks detail with only basic understanding shown of key features 1–2 marks	Comprehensive knowledge and understanding shown of induction programme contents. All key features covered. 3–4 marks		4

0 marks = no evidence submitted or work submitted does not address assessment objective.

TASK 5

Assessment objective	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL
AO2	The training programme may contain basic generic information and does not meet specific needs of a more supervisory position. 1–3 marks	The training programme is extremely focused and targeted on meeting needs of a more supervisory position. 4–6 marks		6
AO3*	No real attempt to assess how day-to-day activities will change in more supervisory role. Evidence is weak and underdeveloped. Quality of written communication demonstrates limited clarity and coherence with basic use of correct terminology. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be noticeable and intrusive. 1–2 marks	Sound attempt to assess how day-to-day activities will change in more supervisory role. Evidence shows sound analysis and some initial judgement shown. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity and coherence with appropriate use of correct terminology. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling but these are not intrusive. 3–4 marks	A coherent and in-depth assessment of how day-to-day activities will change in more supervisory role. Evidence shows strong levels of analysis and judgement. Quality of written communication demonstrates clarity, coherence and fluency with effective and confident use of appropriate and correct terminology. There are few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. 5–6 marks	6

0 marks = no evidence submitted or work submitted does not address assessment objective.

* = This assessment objective includes assessment of quality of written communication.

4.3.5 Authentication of work

Teachers must be confident that the work they mark is the candidate's own. This does not mean that a candidate must be supervised throughout the completion of all work but the teacher must exercise sufficient supervision, or introduce sufficient checks, to be in a position to judge the authenticity of the candidate's work.

Wherever possible, the teacher should discuss work-in-progress with candidates. This will not only ensure that work is underway in a planned and timely manner but will also provide opportunities for assessors to check authenticity of the work and provide general feedback.

Candidates must not plagiarise. Plagiarism is the submission of another's work as one's own and/or failure to acknowledge the source correctly. Plagiarism is considered to be malpractice and could lead to the candidate being disqualified. Plagiarism sometimes occurs innocently when candidates are unaware of the need to reference or acknowledge their sources. It is therefore important that centres ensure that candidates understand that the work they submit must be their own and that they understand the meaning of plagiarism and what penalties may be applied. Candidates may refer to research, quotations or evidence but they must list their sources. The rewards from acknowledging sources, and the credit they will gain from doing so, should be emphasised to candidates as well as the potential risks of failing to acknowledge such material. Candidates may be asked to sign a declaration to this effect. Centres should reinforce this message to ensure candidates understand what is expected of them.

Please note: Centres must confirm to OCR that the evidence produced by candidates is authentic. The Centre Authentication Form includes a declaration for assessors to sign and is available from the [OCR website](#) and [OCR Interchange](#).

4.3.6 Internal standardisation

It is important that all internal assessors, working in the same subject area, work to common standards. Centres must ensure that the internal standardisation of marks across assessors and teaching groups takes place using an appropriate procedure.

This can be done in a number of ways. In the first year, reference material and OCR training meetings will provide a basis for centres' own standardisation. In subsequent years, this, or centres' own archive material, may be used. Centres are advised to hold preliminary meetings of staff involved to compare standards through cross-marking a small sample of work. After most marking has been completed, a further meeting at which work is exchanged and discussed will enable final adjustments to be made.

4.3.7 Moderation

All work for controlled assessment is marked by the teacher and internally standardised by the centre. Marks are then submitted to OCR, after which moderation takes place in accordance with OCR procedures: refer to the OCR website for submission dates of the marks to OCR. The purpose of moderation is to ensure that the standard of the award of marks for work is the same for each centre and that each teacher has applied the standards appropriately across the range of candidates within the centre.

The sample of work which is presented to the moderator for moderation must show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria defined in Section 4.3.4 pages 34 - 40.

Each candidate's work should have a cover sheet attached to it with a summary of the marks awarded for the task. If the work is to be submitted in digital format, this cover sheet should also be submitted electronically within each candidate's files.

4.4 Submitting the moderation samples via the OCR Repository

The OCR Repository is a secure website for centres to upload candidate work and for assessors to access this work digitally. Centres can use the OCR Repository for uploading marked candidate work for moderation.

Centres can access the OCR Repository via OCR Interchange, find their candidate entries in their area of the Repository, and use the Repository to upload files (singly or in bulk) for access by their moderator.

The OCR Repository allows candidates to send evidence in electronic file types that would normally be difficult through postal submissions; for example multimedia and other interactive unit submissions.

The OCR GCSE Applied Business units A242 and A244 can be submitted electronically to the OCR Repository via Interchange: please check Section 7.4.1 page 50 for unit entry codes for the OCR Repository.

There are three ways to load files to the OCR Repository:

- 1 Centres can load multiple files against multiple candidates by clicking on 'Upload candidate files' in the Candidates tab of the Candidate Overview screen.
- 2 Centres can load multiple files against a specific candidate by clicking on 'Upload files' in the Candidate Details screen.
- 3 Centres can load multiple administration files by clicking on 'Upload admin files' in the Administration tab of the Candidate Overview screen.

The OCR Repository is seen as a faster, greener and more convenient means of providing work for assessment. It is part of a wider programme bringing digital technology to the assessment process, the aim of which is to provide simpler and easier administration for centres.

Instructions for how to upload files to OCR using the OCR Repository can be found on [OCR Interchange](#).

5.1 Free resources available from the OCR website

The following materials are available on the OCR website:

- GCSE Applied Business Specification
- [specimen assessment materials for each unit](#)
- [Guide to controlled assessment in Applied Business](#)
- [Teachers' Handbook](#)
- [sample schemes of work and lesson plans](#)
- [exemplar support materials](#)

5.2 Other resources

OCR offers centres a wealth of high quality published support with a choice of 'Official Publisher Partner' and 'Approved Publication' resources, all endorsed by OCR for use with OCR specifications.

5.2.1 Publisher partners

OCR works in close collaboration with publisher partners to ensure you have access to:

- published support materials available when you need them, tailored to OCR specifications
- high quality resources produced in consultation with OCR subject teams, which are linked to OCR's teacher support materials



Hodder is the publisher partner for OCR GCSE Applied Business.

Hodder produces the following resources for OCR GCSE Applied Business for first teaching from September 2009:

- *OCR Applied Business Studies for GCSE (Double Award)* Karen Hough, Rebecca Bentley (ISBN: 9780340987391)

5.2.2 Endorsed publications

OCR endorses a range of publisher materials to provide quality support for centres delivering its qualifications. You can be confident that materials branded with OCR's 'Official Publishing Partner' or 'Approved publication' logos have undergone a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. All responsibility for the content of the publisher's materials rests with the publisher.



These endorsements do not mean that the materials are the only suitable resources available or necessary to achieve an OCR qualification.

5.3 Training

OCR will offer a range of support activities for all practitioners throughout the lifetime of the qualification to ensure they have the relevant knowledge and skills to deliver the qualification.

Please see [Event Booker](#) for further information.

5.4 OCR support services

5.4.1 Active Results

Active Results is available to all centres offering OCR's GCSE Applied Business specifications.

activeresults

Active Results is a free results analysis service to help teachers review the performance of individual candidates or whole schools.

Data can be analysed using filters on several categories such as gender and other demographic information, as well as providing breakdowns of results by question and topic.

Active Results allows you to look in greater detail at your results:

- richer and more granular data will be made available to centres including question level data available from e-marking
- you can identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual candidates and your centre's cohort as a whole
- our systems have been developed in close consultation with teachers so that the technology delivers what you need.

Further information on Active Results can be found on the [OCR website](#).

5.4.2 OCR Interchange

OCR Interchange has been developed to help you to carry out day-to-day administration functions online, quickly and easily. The site allows you to register and enter candidates online. In addition, you can gain immediate and free access to candidate information at your convenience. Sign up on the [OCR website](#).

6.1 Equality Act information relating to GCSE Applied Business

GCSEs often require assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE qualifications and subject criteria were reviewed by the regulators in order to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments and to demonstrate what they know and can do. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to the assessment. Information on reasonable adjustments is found in *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration* by the Joint Council www.jcq.org.uk.

Candidates who are unable to access part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

The access arrangements permissible for use in this specification are in line with Ofqual's GCSE subject criteria equalities review and are as follows:

	Yes/No	Type of Assessment
Readers	Y	All written examinations
Scribes	Y	All written examinations
Practical assistants	Y	All written examinations
Word processors	Y	All written examinations
Transcripts	Y	All written examinations
Oral language modifiers	Y	All written examinations
BSL signers	Y	All written examinations
Modified question papers	Y	All written examinations
Extra time	Y	All written examinations

6.2 Arrangements for candidates with particular requirements (including Special Consideration)

All candidates with a demonstrable need may be eligible for access arrangements to enable them to show what they know and can do. The criteria for eligibility for access arrangements can be found in the JCQ document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*.

Candidates who have been fully prepared for the assessment but who have been affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control at the time of the examination may be eligible for special consideration. As above, centres should consult the JCQ document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*.

7 Administration of GCSE Applied Business

In December 2011 the GCSE qualification criteria were changed by Ofqual. As a result, all GCSE qualifications have been updated to comply with the new regulations.

The most significant change for all GCSE qualifications is that, from 2014, unitised specifications must require that 100% of the assessment is terminal.

The sections below explain in more detail the rules that apply from the June 2014 examination series onwards.

Please note that there are no changes to the terminal rule and re-sit rules for the January 2013 and June 2013 examination series:

- At least 40% of the assessment must be taken in the examination series in which the qualification is certificated.
- Candidates may re-sit each unit once before certification, i.e. each candidate can have two attempts at a unit before certification.

For full information on the assessment availability and rules that apply in the January 2013 and June 2013 examination series, please refer to the previous version of these specifications [GCSE Applied Business and GCSE \(Double Award\) Applied Business \(July 2009\)](#) available on the website.

7.1 Availability of assessment from 2014

There is one examination series available each year in June (all units are available each year in June).

GCSE Applied Business certification is available in June 2014 and each June thereafter.

GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business certification is available in June 2014 and each June thereafter.

	Unit A241	Unit A242	Unit A243	Unit A244	Certification availability
June 2014	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
June 2015	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

7.2 Certification rules

For GCSE Applied Business from June 2014 onwards, a 100% terminal rule applies. Candidates must enter for all their units in the series in which the qualification is certificated.

For GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business, from June 2014 onwards, where a candidate is taking GCSE (Double Award) for the first time and where they have not previously been awarded GCSE Applied Business, a 100% terminal rule applies. Candidates must enter for all their units in the series in which the qualification is certificated.

From June 2014, candidates who have already been awarded GCSE Applied Business and decide to move on to GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business have three options available to them for certification of the double award:

- Re-take all of the GCSE Applied Business units alongside the additional units required for GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business. The new results for the units that have been re-taken will then be used in the calculation of GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business grade. Any results previously achieved will not be re-used.
- Re-take the externally assessed unit A241 alongside the additional units required for GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business and carry forward the result for the controlled assessment unit A242 that was previously used towards GCSE Applied Business. The new result for the externally assessed unit A241 will then be used in the calculation of the GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business grade.
- Take just the additional units required for GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business and carry forward the result for GCSE Applied Business.

Candidates must choose which of these options they want to follow before entries for the double award are made. All new and re-taken units must be entered in the series in which the double award is certificated.

Where a candidate decides to carry forward a result for the controlled assessment unit A242 they must be entered for this unit in the series in which the double award is certificated, using the entry code for the carry forward option (see section 7.4).

Where a candidate decides to carry forward the complete result for GCSE Applied Business they must be entered for the carry forward unit code A240 in the series in which the double award is certificated.

GCSE Applied Business and GCSE (Double Award) Applied Business can be certificated concurrently if all units are taken in the same series.

7.3 Rules for re-taking a qualification

Candidates may enter for each qualification an unlimited number of times.

Where a candidate re-takes a qualification, **all** units must be re-entered and all externally assessed units must be re-taken in the same series as the qualification is re-certificated. The new results for these units will be used to calculate the new qualification grade, any results previously achieved will not be re-used.

For each of the controlled assessment units, candidates who are re-taking a qualification can choose either to re-take that controlled assessment unit or to carry forward the result for that unit that was used towards the previous certification of the same qualification.

- Where a candidate decides to re-take the controlled assessment, the new result will be the one used to calculate the new qualification grade. Any results previously achieved will not be re-used.
- Where a candidate decides to carry forward a result for controlled assessment, they must be entered for the controlled assessment unit in the re-take series using the entry code for the carry forward option (see section 7.4).

For any further advice on rules for re-taking a qualification, please contact OCR.

7.4 Making entries

7.4.1 Unit entries

Centres must be approved to offer OCR qualifications before they can make any entries, including estimated entries. It is recommended that centres apply to OCR to become an approved centre well in advance of making their first entries. Centres must have made an entry for a unit in order for OCR to supply the appropriate forms and administrative materials.

It is essential that correct unit entry codes are used when making unit entries.

For the controlled assessment units, centres can decide whether they want to submit candidates' work for moderation through the OCR Repository or by post. Candidates submitting controlled assessment must be entered for the appropriate unit entry code from the table below. Candidates who are re-taking the qualification and who want to carry forward the controlled assessment should be entered using the unit entry code for the carry forward option.

Centres should note that controlled assessment tasks can still be completed at a time which is appropriate to the centre/candidate. However, where tasks change from year to year, centres would have to ensure that candidates had completed the correct task(s) for the year in which they enter the work for assessment.

Unit entry code	Component code	Assessment method	Unit titles
A241		Written paper	<i>Business in action</i>
A242A	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Making your mark in business</i>
A242B	02	Moderated via postal moderation	<i>Making your mark in business</i>
A242C	80	Carried forward	<i>Making your mark in business</i>
A243		Written paper	<i>Working in business</i>
A244A	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Business and you</i>
A244B	02	Moderated via postal moderation	<i>Business and you</i>
A244C	80	Carried forward	<i>Business and you</i>
A240	80	Carried forward	GCSE Applied Business (J213) result carried forward

7.4.2 Certification entries

Candidates must be entered for qualification certification separately from unit assessment(s). If a certification entry is **not** made, no overall grade can be awarded.

Candidates may be entered for one or both of the following:

- GCSE in Applied Business certification code J213
- GCSE (Double Award) in Applied Business certification code J226.

7.5 Enquiries about results

Under certain circumstances, a centre may wish to query the result issued to one or more candidates. Enquiries about results for GCSE units must be made immediately following the series in which the relevant unit was taken and by the relevant enquiries about results deadline for that series.

Please refer to the *JCQ Post-Results Services* booklet and the *OCR Admin Guide: 14–19 Qualifications* for further guidance on enquiries about results and deadlines. Copies of the latest versions of these documents can be obtained from the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk.

7.6 Prohibited qualifications and classification code

Every specification is assigned a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for these specifications is 0002.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCSE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should seek advice, either from their centre or from the institution to which they wish to progress.

8 Other information about GCSE Applied Business

8.1 Overlap with other qualifications

There is a degree of overlap between the content of these specifications and that of specifications in GCSE Business Studies, GCSE Business and Communication Systems, OCR Nationals Level 1 in Business and ICT and OCR Level 2 Nationals in Business.

8.2 Progression from this qualification

GCSE qualifications are general qualifications which enable candidates to progress either directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications.

Progression to further study from GCSE will depend upon the number and nature of the grades achieved. Broadly, candidates who are awarded mainly Grades D to G at GCSE could either strengthen their base through further study of qualifications at Level 1 within the National Qualifications Framework or could proceed to Level 2. Candidates who are awarded mainly Grades A* to C at GCSE would be well prepared for study at Level 3 within the National Qualifications Framework.

8.3 Avoidance of bias

OCR has taken great care in preparation of these specifications and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. Special focus is given to the 9 strands of the Equality Act with the aim of ensuring both direct and indirect discrimination is avoided.

8.4 Regulatory requirements

These specifications comply in all respects with the current: *General Conditions of Recognition; GCSE, GCE, Principal Learning and Project Code of Practice; GCSE Controlled Assessment regulations* and the *GCSE subject criteria for Business-related subjects*. All documents are available on the [Ofqual website](#).

8.5 Language

These specifications and associated assessment materials are in English only. Only answers written in English will be assessed.

8.6 Spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, economic and cultural issues

These specifications offer opportunities which can contribute to an understanding of these issues in the following topics.

Unit	Spiritual	Moral	Ethical	Social	Legislative	Economic	Cultural
A241		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
A242		✓	✓			✓	
A243			✓	✓	✓	✓	
A244		✓	✓		✓		✓

8.7 Sustainable development, health and safety considerations and European developments, consistent with international agreements

These specifications support these issues, consistent with current EU agreements, as outlined below.

Unit	Sustainable development	Health and Safety considerations	European developments
A241	✓		
A242	✓	✓	
A243		✓	
A244		✓	

8.8 Key Skills

These specifications provide opportunities for the development of the Key Skills of *Communication*, *Application of Number*, *Information and Communication Technology*, *Working with Others*, *Improving Own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving* at Levels 1 and/or 2. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each unit.

The following table indicates where opportunities may exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 1 and/or 2 for each unit.

Unit	C		AoN		IT		WwO		IoLP		PS	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
A241											✓	✓
A242	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A243			✓	✓							✓	✓
A244	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

8.9 ICT

In order to play a full part in modern society, candidates need to be confident and effective users of ICT. These specifications provide candidates with a wide range of appropriate opportunities to use ICT in order to further their study of Applied Business.

The assessment of this course provides candidates with the opportunity to:

- research a particular business context using a variety of research methods, some of which may be ICT based.

There is also the opportunity for candidates to produce their evidence for Units A242 and A244 with the assistance of ICT.

8.10 Citizenship

Since September 2002, the National Curriculum for England at Key Stage 4 has included a mandatory programme of study for Citizenship. Parts of this Programme of Study may be delivered through an appropriate treatment of other subjects.

This section offers guidance on opportunities for developing knowledge, skills and understanding of citizenship issues during the course. These opportunities are indicated where candidates are expected to:

- question and reflect on different ideas, opinions, assumptions, beliefs and values
- research and undertake enquiries into issues and problems, using a range of information, sources and methods
- interpret and analyse critical sources used
- evaluate different viewpoints, exploring connections and relationships between different viewpoints and actions in different contexts.

Structure for evidence

A controlled assessment portfolio is a collection of folders and files containing the candidate's evidence. Folders should be organised in a structured way so that the evidence can be accessed easily by a teacher or moderator. This structure is commonly known as a folder tree. It would be helpful if the location of particular evidence is made clear by naming each file and folder appropriately and by use of an index called 'Home Page'.

There should be a top level folder detailing the candidate's centre number, candidate number, surname and forename, together with the unit code A242 or A244, so that the portfolio is clearly identified as the work of one candidate.

Each candidate produces an assignment for controlled assessment. The evidence should be contained within a separate folder within the portfolio. This folder may contain separate files.

Each candidate's controlled assessment portfolio should be stored in a secure area on the centre's network. Prior to submitting the controlled assessment portfolio to OCR, the centre should add a folder to the folder tree containing controlled assessment and summary forms.

Data formats for evidence

In order to minimise software and hardware compatibility issues it will be necessary to save candidates' work using an appropriate file format.

Candidates must use formats appropriate to the evidence that they are providing and appropriate to viewing for assessment and moderation. Open file formats or proprietary formats for which a downloadable reader or player is available are acceptable. Where this is not available, the file format is not acceptable.

Electronic controlled assessment is designed to give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do using current technology. Candidates do not gain marks for using more sophisticated formats or for using a range of formats. A candidate who chooses to use only word documents will not be disadvantaged by that choice.

Evidence submitted is likely to be in the form of word processed documents, PowerPoint presentations, digital photos and digital video.

To ensure compatibility, all files submitted must be in the formats listed below. Where new formats become available that might be acceptable, OCR will provide further guidance. OCR advises against changing the file format that the document was originally created in. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the electronic portfolios submitted for moderation are accessible to the moderator and fully represent the evidence available for each candidate.

Accepted File Formats

Movie formats for digital video evidence

MPEG (*.mpg)

QuickTime movie (*.mov)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.aam)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.dcr)

Flash (*.swf)

Windows Media File (*.wmf)

MPEG Video Layer 4 (*.mp4)

Audio or sound formats

MPEG Audio Layer 3 (*.mp3)

Graphics formats including photographic evidence

JPEG (*.jpg)

Graphics file (*.pcx)

MS bitmap (*.bmp)

GIF images (*.gif)

Animation formats

Macromedia Flash (*.fla)

Structured markup formats

XML (*.xml)

Text formats

Comma Separated Values (.csv)

PDF (.pdf)

Rich text format (.rtf)

Text document (.txt)

Microsoft Office suite

PowerPoint (.ppt)

Word (.doc)

Excel (.xls)

Visio (.vsd)

Project (.mpp)



YOUR CHECKLIST

Our aim is to provide you with all the information and support you need to deliver our specifications.

- Bookmark www.ocr.org.uk/gcse2012
- Be among the first to hear about support materials and resources as they become available. Register for email updates at www.ocr.org.uk/updates.
- Book your inset training place online at www.ocreventbooker.org.uk
- Learn more about active results at www.ocr.org.uk/activeresults
- Join our applied business social network community for teachers at www.social.ocr.org.uk

NEED MORE HELP?

Here's how to contact us for specialist advice:

Phone: **01223 553998**

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

Online: <http://answers.ocr.org.uk>

Fax: **01223 552627**

Post: **Customer Contact Centre, OCR, Progress House,
Westwood Business Park, Coventry CV4 8JQ**

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Become an approved OCR centre – if your centre is completely new to OCR and has not previously used us for any examinations, visit www.ocr.org.uk/centreapproval to become an approved OCR centre.

Contact us

Keep up to date with the latest news by registering to receive e-alerts at www.ocr.org.uk/updates

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