

Vocational Qualifications (QCF, NVQ, NQF)

Employability Skills

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

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

Level 1 Award Employability Skills - **10347**

Level 1 Certificate Employability Skills - **10348**

Level 2 Award Employability Skills - **10349**

Level 2 Certificate Employability Skills - **10350**

OCR Report to Centres 2013-2014

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

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

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

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Centre Assessment:

Findings:

Many centres have submitted units of a very good standard, showing clear evidence of careful assessment by the centre assessors and including motivational comments and suggestions for improvement for their candidates. Best practice is for the centre assessor to tick each correct response, thus indicating clearly to the moderation team that the task fully satisfies the assessment criteria. A tick should also appear on forms, CVs and any other additional documents. Please note: candidates should **not** include coursework or classroom handouts with their evidence.

In cases where units have been withdrawn, the resubmitted tasks are usually much improved and are accepted upon resubmission. Centres are advised to submit a copy of the original report with resubmitted units to support the changes which have been made by the candidate.

The majority of centres continue to use the OCR-prepared evidence booklets to collect and record candidate evidence. The few centres who produce their own evidence sometimes fail to successfully map the tasks to the assessment criteria.

Areas of good practice across the 3 levels include: accuracy and attractive display of forms (Units 5, 12 and 17), improved content and display of CVs (also Units 5, 12 and 17), improved understanding of the differences between skills and attributes (most units), a good understanding of UK state benefits (Units 2, 10 and 15) and an ability to produce a range of open and closed interview questions (Units 11 and 16).

Areas of weakness include an unclear understanding of workplace values (Unit 7), poor knowledge of health and safety signs (Unit 6), failure to display monetary items as currency (Units 2, 10 and 15) and failure to provide full addresses (including postcodes) in Units 11 and 16. Websites, when listed, must be shown in a correct format. Best practice would be to include the www. before the website address. Some candidates also have difficulty in identifying workplace situations (Unit 12).

Under the new scheme, scribes may be used for all tasks except for the production of the forms and the CV in Units 5, 12 and 17. In all other tasks, a scribe may be used. However, it is essential that the scribe's name and signature appear on the front of the appropriate evidence booklets and an initial or signature appears on each task in which scribing has occurred. A scribe must use the candidate's exact words.

Witness statements have raised problems for some centres. The candidate has no part to play in the preparation of a witness statement, which should be completed entirely by the witness. The date on the witness statement must pre-date the sign-off date of the evidence booklet by the candidate. Witness statements which fall outside of the booklet completion date will be referred to the OCR Compliance team for further investigation.

Internal Moderation:

Findings:

Where a number of assessors operate within the same centre, it is advisable to carry out internal quality assurance prior to the submission of the evidence. The name of the IQA should be clearly indicated on the front of every unit checked, and it is also helpful if an initial is added to each task moderated. In some centres, internal quality assurance is said to have taken place, but the sampling has not resulted in a consistent approach to the assessment of the tasks, ie units have been withdrawn.

It is hoped that feedback provided by the moderator via the e–NQF6 will be passed to all members of the team and the IQA as a priority. This should be used to inform future submissions.

Administration/Documentation:

Findings:

The vast majority of centres follow the correct administrative procedures and submit all the necessary evidence etc in the required manner. This is greatly appreciated by the team of examiner/moderators who rely on the timely receipt of the batches for an efficient turnaround time.

When preparing the e–claim for certification, centre administrators must ensure that the correct name of the unit assessor appears alongside the candidate's name. This allows accurate sampling of units to take place.

Centres are reminded that the batch of evidence booklets must be sent to the examiner/moderator within 24 hours of submitting the e–claim on Interchange. Failure to do so will result in a delay in moderating the batches.

A copy of the e–claim should also be included with each batch of evidence booklets sent to the examiner/moderator. The work of each candidate should be accompanied by a Candidate Submission Sheet which states clearly which units are being submitted for moderation. If the candidate has used the OCR evidence booklets, there is no need to send an Evidence Checklist.

Please also check that all evidence booklets bear the name and signature of the candidate, the unit assessor and, where appropriate, the IQA and/or the scribe.

Centres are reminded to check OCR Interchange for a copy of the e–NQF6 report which gives detailed feedback on candidate performance. In the case of batches where all units have been withdrawn, the report is forwarded to the centre by the OCR Operations team.

OCR Support and Resources:

Findings:

There is a significant number of useful and improved resources available to centres in the Employability Skills section of the OCR website. Resources include tutor support sheets, resource links, delivery guides and lesson elements. New resources are produced on a regular basis, so centres are advised to check the website at regular intervals.

The updated Centre Handbook is also available.

Assessment Summary:

Findings:

This new qualification has placed the emphasis on the workplace and, as a result, the tasks in the evidence booklets are more relevant to the modern workplace.

After a hesitant start, centres are becoming more familiar with the demands of the new scheme and good work is coming through on a regular basis. It is reassuring to see evidence of good practice emerging from a range of centres.

Developments

With the reduction in the number of unemployed people across the UK, it is possible that there may be a drop in the take-up of this qualification over the coming year. As many of our most prolific centres are training organisations, it is likely that funding will change as new priorities emerge. However, in the meantime, this qualification is providing a useful option for centres who need to get their candidates a qualification in a limited amount of time.

The least successful cohort of candidates come from schools, mainly sixth forms. For many of these candidates, teachers enter them for the Level 2 units, for which they are generally ill-equipped. As the school leaving age increases again over the coming year, I would imagine that there will be more entries from this cohort.

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