

Cambridge **TECHNICALS LEVEL 3**

IT

CAMBRIDGE
TECHNICALS

**CERTIFICATE SUITE
QUALIFICATION HANDBOOK**

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT (05838)
OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in IT (05839)

First teaching from September 2016
Version 8 – March 2024



About this handbook

The information we've provided in this handbook is correct at the time we produced it. Occasionally we may update it so please check the qualification [webpages](#) for the most up-to-date information.

Staff involved in delivering these qualifications must have access to and understand the requirements in this handbook.

For information on how to administer these qualifications please follow the link to the OCR [Administration area](#). You'll find all the details about how the qualifications run, what you need to do and when. It covers everything from becoming an OCR centre, to making entries, claiming certificates, special arrangements and contacting us for advice.

About us

OCR is a leading UK awarding body and part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

We are a not-for-profit organisation so success is measured through the impact and reach of our activities and the scale of our contribution to helping people realise their aspirations.

We work in partnership with teachers, employers, higher education and government to develop general and vocational qualifications that will equip learners of all abilities, with the knowledge and skills they need to reach their full potential.

Thank you

We've worked with centres, employers and higher education institutions to design these qualifications.

Thank you to everyone who provided support and feedback as we developed the new Cambridge Technicals in IT. Particular thanks go to those of you who helped us shape these qualifications by so generously giving your own time to share your advice and experiences.

Releases of this handbook

For details of each of the releases see Appendix C

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1 Qualifications overview

Size and purpose at a glance

This suite is made up of six qualifications and they share some common units.

Units 1, 2, 3 and Unit CC (formerly Unit 25) are assessed by exam and marked by us. The remaining units are internally assessed by your centre staff and moderated by OCR.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT

180 GLH
equivalent
to one AS
level in
terms of
size

- Unit 1 and 2 (90 GLH each) are mandatory
- Both units are externally examined

It will provide learners with the opportunity through applied learning to develop core principles and specialist knowledge and understanding required in the IT sector

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in IT

360 GLH
equivalent
to one A
level in
terms of
size

- 2 x 90 and 3 x 60 GLH units
- Three externally examined units and a choice of two further units which are centre-assessed and moderated by us.

It will provide learners with the opportunity through applied learning to develop the core specialist knowledge, skills and understanding required in the IT sector.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Introductory Diploma in IT

360 GLH
equivalent
to one A
level in
terms of
size

- 2 x 90 and 3 x 60 GLH units
- At least two externally examined units and a choice of three further units which are either examined or centre-assessed and moderated by us.
- A specialist pathway must be followed. There are four pathways to choose from.

Learners will be able to develop the core knowledge, skills and understanding the IT sector required in the IT sector, and develop further skills by completing a range of units through a choice of these specialist pathways:

- IT Infrastructure Technician
- Emerging Digital Technology Practitioner
- Application Developer
- Data Analyst

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Foundation Diploma in IT

540 GLH

equivalent to one and a half A levels in terms of size

- 2 x 90 and 6 x 60 GLH units
- At least two externally examined units and a choice of six further units which are either examined or centre-assessed and moderated by us, which will make up a specialist endorsed pathway.

Learners will be able to develop the core knowledge, skills and understanding required by the IT sector, and develop further skills by completing a range of units through a choice of these specialist pathways:

- IT Infrastructure Technician
- Emerging Digital Technology Practitioner
- Application Developer
- Data Analyst.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma in IT

720 GLH

equivalent to two A levels in terms of size

- 2 x 90 and 9 x 60 GLH units
- Three externally examined units and a choice of eight further units, centre-assessed and moderated by us, which will make up a specialist endorsed pathway.

Learners will be able to develop the core knowledge, skills and understanding required by the IT sector, and develop further skills by completing a range of units through a choice of these specialist pathways:

- IT Infrastructure Technician
- Emerging Digital Technology Practitioner
- Application Developer
- Data Analyst.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma in IT

1080 GLH

equivalent to three A levels in terms of size

- 3 x 90 and a mixture of a number of 60 GLH units and a 30 GLH unit.
- Four externally examined units and a choice of thirteen further units, centre-assessed and moderated by us, which will make up a specialist endorsed pathway.

Learners will be able to develop the core knowledge, skills and understanding required by the IT sector, and develop further skills by completing a range of units through a choice of these specialist pathways:

- Digital Technician
- Application Data Technician.

You'll find the units and supporting documents for these qualifications on our website.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT at a glance

Qualification number	601/7097/9	OCR Entry code	05838
First registration date	01/09/2016	Approved age range	16–18, 19+
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	180	UCAS points	You'll find further information on the UCAS website .
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	220	Performance information	See section 2 performance information .
Exam sessions each year	January and June	Eligible for funding	It's designed to meet the funding requirements of a 16–19 study programme.

Entry requirements	There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification. However it would be advantageous if learners have studied similar unit content at Level 2.
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This qualification has been designed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for learners who are on a 16–19 study programme to meet the Department for Education's characteristics for an Applied General qualification.
This qualification is suitable for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> who want to gain a Level 3 qualification to support further study in Further Education (FE) or Higher Education (HE) in IT. looking to gain a Level 3 qualification to support further study in FE or HE in any other sector or subject area who want to progress into IT-related apprenticeships.

Qualification structure	Learners must achieve a total of a total of two mandatory units.
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Assessment method/model	Both units are assessed by exam and marked by us. Your centre staff will internally assess all the other units and we will moderate them.
Grading	Examined units are graded Near-Pass, Pass, Merit and Distinction. The qualification is graded P, M, D, D*.

Examination resits	Learners can resit an examined unit twice before they complete the qualification.
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Statement of purpose

Who is the **OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT** for?

This qualification is designed for learners 16 years old or over who want to continue their education through applied learning by developing their knowledge and understanding of the principles of IT and global information systems. It is designed to be taken alongside other qualifications (such as level 3 vocational Cambridge Technicals in Business, Digital Media and/or A level Computing, English or Mathematics) within a 16-19 study programme, primarily to support the main subjects.

Achievement of this qualification can support progression to go on and study in a Higher Education institution either on relevant IT degrees such as, Computing and Technology or Business IT or support progression on to other degree courses.

There are no formal entry requirements or requirement for any specific prior learning, although a good level of literacy and numeracy skills is expected.

What does this qualification cover?

Learners will take two mandatory units to achieve this qualification, Fundamentals of IT and Global information systems, both of which are externally assessed. The units provide learners with an insight into the IT sector as they investigate the pace of technological change, IT infrastructure, the flow of information on a global scale and important legal and security considerations.

The mandatory units also assist in the development of transferrable skills valued by Higher Education institutions such as communication and problem solving.

Is this qualification right for my learner?

This qualification is part of a suite of OCR Cambridge Technicals in IT at Levels 2 and 3. Normally a learner would choose one of the OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in IT because they have successfully gained Level 2 qualifications in a similar or related subject, but there are no formal requirements for these qualifications.

This qualification is one of six available in the OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in IT suite:

- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT (180 GLH)
- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in IT (360 GLH)
- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Introductory Diploma in IT (with specialist pathways) (360 GLH)
- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Foundation Diploma in IT (with specialist pathways) (540 GLH)
- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma in IT (with specialist pathways) (720 GLH)
- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma in IT (with specialist pathways) (1080 GLH)

The Certificate will provide learners with the fundamental skills, knowledge and understanding of IT. It could be taken alongside other vocational or academic qualifications, as part of a study programme to support progression to Higher Education in IT or other degree programmes.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in IT at a glance

Qualification number	601/7098/0	OCR Entry code	05839
First registration date	01/09/2016	Approved age range	16–18, 19+
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	360	UCAS points	You'll find further information on the UCAS website .
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	490	Performance information	See section 2 performance information .
Exam sessions each year	January and June	Eligible for funding	It's designed to meet the funding requirements of a 16–19 study programme.

Entry requirements	There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification. However it would be advantageous if learners have studied similar unit content at Level 2.
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This qualification has been designed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for learners who are on a 16–19 study programme to meet the Department for Education's characteristics for an Applied General qualification.
This qualification is suitable for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> who want to gain a Level 3 qualification to support further study in Further Education (FE) or Higher Education (HE) in IT. looking to gain a Level 3 qualification to support further study in FE or HE in any other sector or subject area who want to progress into IT-related apprenticeships.

Qualification structure	Learners must achieve a total of five units consisting of three mandatory units and two optional units.
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Assessment method/model	Units 1, 2 and 3 are assessed by exam and marked by us. Your centre staff will internally assess all the other units and we will moderate them.
Grading	Examined units are graded Near-Pass, Pass, Merit and Distinction. Internally assessed units are graded Pass, Merit and Distinction. The qualification is graded P, M, D, D*.

Examination resits	Learners can resit an examined unit twice before they complete the qualification.
Repeat submission of learner's work	If you and the learner feel they haven't performed at their best during the assessment, the learner can, at your discretion, improve their work and resubmit it to you for assessment. You must follow our requirements on authenticity and feedback in section 8.

Statement of purpose

Who is the **OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in IT** for?

This qualification is designed for learners 16 years old or over who want to continue their education through applied learning by developing their knowledge and understanding of the principles of IT and global information systems. Achievement of this qualification can support progression to go on and study relevant IT degrees in a Higher Education institution such as, Computing and IT, Computing Science, Software Developments, Software Engineering, ICT and Computer Networks or Business Information Systems.

There are no formal entry requirements or requirement for any specific prior learning, although a good level of literacy and numeracy skills is expected.

You could include this qualification into a wider programme of study incorporating a variety of Level 3 qualifications such as the vocational Cambridge Technicals in Business, Digital Media and/or A level Computing, English and Mathematics.

What does this qualification cover?

Learners will take five units to achieve this qualification.

There are three mandatory units that are externally assessed. These are the Fundamentals of IT, Global information and Cyber security. The first two mandatory units provide learners with an insight into the IT sector as you investigate the pace of technological change, IT infrastructure, the flow of information on a global scale and important legal and security considerations. The third mandatory unit reflects an important development in the sector around information security and requires learners to consider how data should be protected and the response of the IT sector to emerging threats such as cyber terrorism.

Learners must then take two of the four optional units that are centre-assessed and moderated by OCR. The optional units include Project management, Product development, Systems analysis and design and the Internet of Everything.

All units assist in the development of transferrable skills such as communication and problem solving. The optional units encourage the development of time management, research and analytical skills as well as emphasising the need for good written and verbal communication skills.

Is this qualification right for my learner?

This qualification is part of a suite of OCR Cambridge Technicals in IT at Levels 2 and 3. Normally a learner would choose one of the OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in IT because they have successfully gained Level 2 qualifications in a similar or related subject, but there are no formal requirements for these qualifications.

This qualification is one of six available within the OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in IT suite:

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT (180 GLH)

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in IT (360 GLH)

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Introductory Diploma in IT (with specialist pathways) (360 GLH)

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Foundation Diploma in IT (with specialist pathways) (540 GLH)

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma in IT (with specialist pathways) (720 GLH)

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma in IT (with specialist pathways) (1080 GLH)

Learners should take the Extended Certificate if they want to gain the specialist skills, knowledge and understanding of IT which taken alongside other vocational or academic qualifications, can allow them access to Higher Education in IT-related programmes.

The Extended Certificate takes 360 guided learning hours to deliver. This means it's a similar size to an A level and can be taken as part of a one or two year study programme. This gives learners the flexibility to take other qualifications, whether vocational or academic, in preparation for further study in the sector.

2 About these qualifications

Introduction

This handbook contains what you need to know about the planning, delivery and assessment of these qualifications.

Information about the administration of these qualifications, including an overview is available in the [administration area](#) on our website.

Qualification size

The size of the qualification is described in terms of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and Total Qualification Time (TQT).

GLH indicates the approximate time (in hours) that the learner will be supervised during any teaching, learning or assessment activities. We have worked with people who are experienced in delivering IT qualifications to determine what content needs to be taught and how long it will take to deliver.

TQT is comprised of two elements: GLH, and an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably spend on any unsupervised learning or assessment activities (including homework) so they can successfully achieve their qualification.

The 2 unit Certificate needs 180 GLH and 220 TQT.

The 5 unit Extended Certificate needs 360 GLH and 490 TQT.

How does it fit into a 16–19 study programme?

The Certificate (180 GLH) is designed to be taken alongside other qualifications within a 16–19 study programme, primarily to support the main subject.

The Extended Certificate (360 GLH) is designed to either form the substantive part of a single year programme or to be taken in combination with other elements in either a vocational or academic programme.

You should make sure learners are informed of the title and level of the qualification they have been entered for and that Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) is the awarding body for their chosen qualification.

Is there a learner entry requirement?

No, to take these qualifications learners don't need any specific knowledge or skills related to the qualification.

Learners should be aged 16 or over.

Do learners need specific prior learning?	<p>No. However it would be advantageous for learners to have studied similar unit content at Level 2.</p> <p>We recommend you carry out an initial assessment to make sure learners are capable of reaching the required standards of the qualification they intend to work towards.</p>
How are these qualifications delivered?	<p>You're free to deliver these qualifications using any mode of delivery that meets the needs of your learners.</p> <p>Whichever mode of delivery you decide to use, you must make sure learners have appropriate access to the resources they will need to develop the required skills, understanding and knowledge and to complete the assessments.</p> <p>We recommend you reference teaching and development of subject content and associated skills to real life situations and case studies.</p>
What are the subject knowledge requirements for our centre staff?	<p>Tutors must have the relevant level of subject knowledge and skills to deliver these qualifications.</p>
Are there specific resource requirements for my centre?	<p>Yes, there are specific requirements for some units and we've detailed these in the individual units. For example, for Unit 4, Computer networks, learners will need access to a private network.</p> <p>Health and safety Please also make sure your learners are provided with appropriate physical resources, such as protective equipment and/or clothing, wherever this is appropriate.</p> <p>You and your centre must take care and follow all health and safety requirements and quality assurance procedures specific to each practical activity. You must make sure the appropriate health and safety policies are in place for equipment used by learners, even if the equipment isn't specified in the unit content.</p> <p>Assessment Your centre must provide appropriate examination facilities for learners that comply with the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) Instructions for Conducting Examinations.</p>

<p>How are these qualifications assessed?</p>	<p>The Certificate is assessed by written exams that are marked by us.</p> <p>The Extended Certificate is assessed using a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• external assessment, which we set and mark• internal assessment, where the tutor assesses the learners' work and we externally moderate it.
<p>How are these graded?</p>	<p>Each examined unit achieved will be graded Near-Pass, Pass, Merit or Distinction.</p> <p>Each internally assessed unit achieved will be graded as Pass, Merit or Distinction.</p> <p>Learners who don't achieve at least a Near-Pass or a Pass in a unit will be unclassified.</p> <p>A learner must get at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a Near-Pass for each examined unit, and• a Pass for each internally-assessed unit to be awarded the qualification they have entered for. <p>Qualifications are graded using a Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction* (and Unclassified) structure.</p> <p>You'll find full details about the rules for achieving a qualification and about grading in section 10 'How to calculate the qualification grade'.</p>
<p>Availability and funding</p>	<p>These qualifications are designed to meet the funding requirements of a 16–19 study programme and 19–23 entitlement.</p> <p>To check if these qualifications are approved for delivery and funding in your country you must visit the following websites for the latest information:</p> <p>England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Register of Regulated Qualifications – Ofqual's register of regulated qualifications• Education and Skills Funding Agency for funding education and training for learners 14-19 years in England. This list was formerly known as the section 96. <p>Wales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualifications in Wales database (QiW) - for information on approved and designated qualifications in Wales including funding

Northern Ireland

- [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) – for England and Northern Ireland
- [NIEFQAN](#) – Approval of qualifications by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [Department for the Economy](#) for public funding in Northern Ireland.

Use the Qualification Number (QN) when you're looking for information on qualification eligibility for public funding.

If you have any queries about funding for these qualifications email us at funding@ocr.org.uk.

Delivery in Wales and Northern Ireland

Learners in Wales and Northern Ireland shouldn't be disadvantaged by terms, legislation or aspects of government that are different from those in England.

Where such situations might occur, we've used neutral terms so learners may apply whatever is appropriate and current to their own situation.

Language

We will provide specifications, assessments and supporting documentation in English. Only answers provided in English will be assessed.

Performance information

We've designed these qualifications to meet the Department for Education (DfE) requirements for qualifications in the Applied General category of the 16 to 19 performance tables.

You'll find information on:

- Performance tables for England on the [Department for Education](#) website
- Performance points for Northern Ireland on the [Department of Education](#) website
- Performance measures for Wales on Qualifications in Wales database (QiW). If you have any queries about the performance information then please email ims@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

Are these qualifications recognised in the UCAS tariff tables?

Yes. You'll find further information on the [UCAS website](#).

It's always important for learners to check individual course requirements when applying to university.

Last entry date

These qualifications will continue to be available for entries and certification until we decide they need to be withdrawn.

If we're going to withdraw a qualification we'll set an end date for entries and certification and we'll tell you what the arrangements are for the last date to enter learners and make claims for certificates.

When we set end dates, you'll be able to see these on the Register of Regulated Qualifications and the Qualifications in Wales database (QiW). If an end date is not specified, it's because the qualification is still available.

3 Qualification resources, support and useful links

Our aim is to provide you with the information and support you need to deliver these qualifications.

Qualification resources available on Teach Cambridge

Delivery guide

Each unit delivery guide contains a range of lesson ideas with associated activities you can use with your learners. We've structured the guide by learning outcome so you can see how each activity helps learners cover the specification. The guide also explains key terms and common misconceptions.

Lesson elements

These are task sheets with accompanying teacher instructions. Each lesson element offers you a creative way of encouraging your learners to engage with the topic, with individual and group exercises, research activities and the opportunity to develop English and maths skills.

Resources links

For some of the units there is an e-resource that provides you with links to a range of teaching and learning websites and materials for each unit.

Skills guides

We've written skills guides for you and your learners. They can help review or refresh skills in a variety of areas including:

- managing projects
- research
- referencing (good practice in acknowledging the work of other authors and avoiding accusations of plagiarism)
- command verbs
- examinations.

You can find these on the website under [skills guides](#).

Project approach to delivery

These resources will show you how you can set an IT project so that you can deliver the content in a holistic manner.

Qualifications calculator

This tool helps you and your learners to make sure that the right number and combination of units is chosen for a selected qualification.

Progress tracker

This tool helps you track your learners' progress through their chosen units.

Sample assessment materials

We only provide sample assessment materials for the externally assessed units. This is because we set the assessment for these units. Sample assessments show you what the assessment will look like, and you can use them as practice materials.

You can download sample assessment materials and past papers from our [website](#).

Model assignments

We provide model assignments for mandatory internally assessed units. These can be:

- used as they are to assess your learners
- modified to suit your local or regional environment
- used as a guide to help you design your own assignments.

Assignment checking service

You can develop your own assessment for internally assessed units.

We provide an optional assignment checking service for Cambridge Technicals centres. If you use this service we'll check that the assignment you've designed covers the grading criteria in the unit and allows every learner to reach the highest grade if they demonstrate they have the associated level of knowledge, understanding and skills.

You can find more information about this service (including the price) on the [Cambridge Technicals](#) page.

Professional Development

We provide face-to-face courses and live online training events (webinars) where you can benefit from information, advice and guidance from subject experts and network with fellow professionals. We'll also produce presentations and films that provide detailed information and feedback about specifications, grading criteria and candidate performance in past sessions.

Visit our website to find out about all our current courses and professional development.

Useful documents and links

Key OCR documents

Units

These are separate documents that you'll find on the qualification page of our website.

Candidate Authentication Statement for OCR Cambridge Technicals

Learners must sign this statement to confirm that the work they've submitted for assessment is their own. The form is completed when work is submitted for assessment and it can cover more than one unit. Every unit of the learner's qualification must be listed on a Candidate Authentication statement; there doesn't have to be a separate form for each unit.

Unit Recording Sheets (URS)

You complete this form to record and justify your assessment decisions. You must fill in a URS for each unit a learner completes and make this available with the work during visiting moderation.

Witness Statement

You should use this form when you've observed a learner as part of their assessment. Use it to testify or corroborate what has actually been observed by you.

For more information, see 'Witness Statements' in section 8.

Useful links

OCR	What is malpractice? Administration information.
JCQ	Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments
Ofqual	Regulatory documents Register of Regulated Qualifications – for England and Northern Ireland
QiW	Qualifications in Wales database (QiW) - for information on approved and designated qualifications in Wales including funding
CCEA	CCEA website
Department of Education, Northern Ireland	Department of Education publications Performance measures /NI entitlement framework qualifications accreditation number (NIEFQAN) file

4 How these qualifications are structured

These qualifications are made up of units which can feature in one or more of the qualifications in the IT suite. Learners don't have to achieve the units in any particular order but it's worth noting for the Extended Certificate that the content in mandatory units 1, 2 and 3 underpin the learning in other units (see Appendix C).

You must consider the relationship between the mandatory units and the others when you plan the learning programme. We strongly recommend that learners achieve these units before being assessed in others. To help you with your delivery planning most units highlight opportunities for applying learning across units (see Appendix B)

When combining units for the chosen qualification, it's your responsibility to make sure the rules for the qualification are followed.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT (180 GLH)

For this qualification learners must achieve two mandatory units.

Key to units for this qualification:

M = Mandatory Learners must achieve both of these units
E = External assessment We set and mark the exam

Unit no.	Unit title	Guided learning hours (GLH)	Unit ref. no. (URN)	How are they assessed?	Mandatory or optional
1	Fundamentals of IT	90	M/507/4999	E	M
2	Global information	90	R/507/5000	E	M

To achieve this qualification there's mandatory content that all learners must have successfully mastered. This content is shown in the table above by an **M** and it contributes 100% to the qualification grade.

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in IT (360 GLH)

For this qualification, learners must achieve five units, three mandatory units and two optional units.

Key to units for this qualification:

M = Mandatory	Learners must achieve these units
O = Optional	Learners must achieve two of these units
E = External assessment	We set and mark the exam
I = Internal assessment	You assess this and we moderate it

Unit no.	Unit title	Guided learning hours (GLH)	Unit ref no. (URN)	How are they assessed?	Mandatory or optional
1	Fundamentals of IT	90	M/507/4999	E	M
2	Global information	90	R/507/5000	E	M
3	Cyber security	60	Y/507/5001	E	M
8	Project management	60	F/507/5008	I	O
9	Product development	60	A/507/5010	I	O
11	Systems analysis and design	60	J/507/5012	I	O
17	Internet of Everything	60	H/507/5020	I	O

To achieve this qualification there's mandatory content that all learners must have successfully mastered. This content is shown in the table above by an **M** and it contributes 66.6% to the qualification grade.

You can download the units from our qualification webpage.

5 Preparing for qualification delivery and assessment

Centre and centre assessor responsibilities

Before you plan to seek approval from us to offer these qualifications you must be confident your centre can fulfil all the responsibilities described below.

The quality of the delivery of teaching and the integrity of assessments and quality assurance is paramount. Systems have to be in place so that assessments are fair, valid, reliable, authentic and sufficient. One of the key factors behind valid, fair and reliable assessment is the expertise of those doing the assessment and internal quality assurance.

With this in mind here's a summary of the responsibilities that your centre and centre assessors **must** be able to fulfil:

- there are enough trained or qualified people to:
 - teach and assess the expected number of learners you have in your cohorts
 - internally standardise the number of assessors assessing units you offer
- all teaching staff have the relevant level of subject knowledge and skills to deliver the units you plan to offer and will fully cover the supporting knowledge, understanding and skills requirements for each unit
- any necessary resources are available for teaching and for assessment activities, to give learners every opportunity to meet the requirements of the unit and reach the highest grade possible
- there's a system of standardisation in place so that all assessment decisions for internally assessed units are consistent, fair, valid and reliable. (see 'centre standardisation' in section 8)
- there's enough time for effective teaching, assessment and internal standardisation
- processes are in place to make sure that learners' work is authentic (see the section on authenticity of learners' work in section 8)
- any materials we provide for assessment of internally assessed units cannot be used for practice and then used again, without change, for summative assessment (see section 8)
- for internally assessed units you comply with our requirements for giving feedback to learners (see section 8)
- for internally assessed units that grades are correctly recorded in all records and accurately transcribed to the claim being submitted to us
- exams must be conducted so they comply with the JCQ **Instructions for Conducting Examinations**

- a declaration is made at the point you're submitting any work to us for assessment that confirms:
 - all assessment is conducted according to the specified regulations identified in the [Administration area](#)
 - learners' work is authentic
 - grades have been transcribed accurately when completing our claim documentation
- centre records and learners' work is kept according to the requirements below:
 - Learners' work must be kept until after their qualifications have been awarded and any appeals processed. We will not consider any appeals if the centre does not keep the work.
 - Internal standardisation and assessment records must be kept securely for a minimum of three years after the date we've issued a certificate for a qualification.

Centre assessors, who are responsible for assessing learners' evidence for internally assessed units, must make sure that:

- learners understand what they need to do to meet the grading criteria and produce valid and sufficient evidence
- learners have access to the resources they need to meet the grading criteria and produce evidence
- any assessment guidance is referred to when making assessment decisions
- learners know they must comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) when they're producing work for assessment. Learners must not reference another individual's personal details in any evidence produced for summative assessment. It's the learner's responsibility to make sure evidence that includes another individual's personal details is anonymised
- learners' work is authentic
- the learner has completed a Candidate Authentication Statement which covers every unit
- they judge learners' work against the grading criteria we provide for the units
- they record their assessment decisions and justify the grade put forward for moderation using our unit recording sheet (URS)- we provide one for each unit
- they give an appropriate level of feedback to learners, and record what feedback has been given as part of the summative assessment
- they liaise with other assessors in the centre to make sure assessment decisions are to the required standard (see 'centre standardisation' in section 8)
- they confirm the unit grade for the learner after internal standardisation (assessors can let the learner know which grade has been given but that it can't be confirmed until after our moderation)
- all relevant evidence is present and reflects centre assessment decisions against the grading criteria (and the candidate authentication statement is available) before the unit is claimed.

Guidance for delivery

The guidance about how to deliver these qualifications isn't exhaustive. You should tailor your delivery so it meets the interests and needs of your learners and local and regional employers.

You're free to deliver these qualifications using any mode of delivery that meets the needs of your learners. Whichever mode you use, your learners must have appropriate access to the resources they need to complete their learning and carry out their assignments for assessment.

You should consider the learner's complete learning experience when you're designing learning programmes. These qualifications can be part of a 16–19 study programme and there'll be ways to integrate learning required for other qualifications or to develop and maintain the skills that are essential for further study and work. For example, we know it's important to keep developing English and maths skills after GCSE. We'll help you with your curriculum planning by signposting opportunities for English and maths skills practice in the delivery guides for each unit. You can access the delivery guides from the IT qualification page of our website.

A project-based approach to teaching and learning is an ideal way to deliver these qualifications holistically, and we will help you develop your approach through our resources. We've talked with centres who deliver our qualifications about the benefits of a project-based approach to learning. They've told us:

- it reinforces a synoptic application of skills and knowledge
- it's relevant to and reflective of work
- it makes the process of learning and application more meaningful and motivating.

We've designed these qualifications to facilitate this.

Important information on teaching content in units

(The use of i.e. /e.g. in teaching content)

The teaching content in every unit tells you what you have to teach to make sure learners can access the highest grades.

Anything which follows an i.e. details what you must teach as part of that area of content.

Anything which follows an e.g. is illustrative. Where we use e.g., learners must know and be able to apply relevant examples in their work, although these don't need to be the same ones specified in the unit content.

For internally assessed units you need to make sure that any assignments you create, or any modifications you make to an assignment, don't expect the learner to do more than they've been taught, but must enable them to access the full range of grades as described in the grading criteria.

For externally assessed units, where the content contains i.e. and e.g. under specific areas of content, we'll follow these rules when we set questions for an exam:

- we may ask a direct question about unit content that follows an i.e.
- where we show unit content as an e.g. a direct question will not be asked about that example. Any questions about the area of content will give learners the opportunity to

provide their own examples as the unit has not specified which examples they should be familiar with.

Initial assessment of learners

It's important that you carry out an initial assessment to identify learners' levels of knowledge and understanding and any potential gaps that need to be addressed. This will also:

- help you and the learners to identify the most appropriate optional units
- allow you to plan the assessment
- help learners understand the best place to start generating evidence.

Prior knowledge and experience

Of course, learners may have already gained a lot of relevant knowledge and experience that you should take into account. This is particularly relevant where they're studying part-time while in work.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is the process for recognising learning that never received formal recognition through a qualification or certification. This includes knowledge and skills gained in school, college or university and outside formal learning situations. Evidence can draw on any aspect of a candidate's prior experience including:

- domestic/family life
- education
- training
- work activities
- voluntary activities.

It's important you make it clear to learners that the RPL process is about how they've acquired the knowledge, understanding or skills; it doesn't mean they're exempt from the assessment. In no circumstance does the RPL process mean that any required qualification assessments can be avoided e.g. mandatory exams, practical/theory tests or assignments.

Evidence obtained through the RPL process must be assessed, to the same rigorous quality as evidence obtained through any other process.

RPL allows an individual to avoid unnecessary learning and we encourage the use of it in relation to the internally assessed units. Please let your learners know they can bring forward any relevant learning so it can be assessed against the grading criteria specified in the internally assessed unit(s) they aim to complete.

We ask you to judge the relevance of every aspect of a learner's prior learning (including how current and relevant it is) to the unit being assessed, before we moderate the assessment.

6 Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment is a feature of these qualifications and it requires learners to use an appropriate selection of their knowledge, understanding and skills, acquired through all of the units that make up their qualification, in an integrated way and apply them to a key task or tasks.

This way helps learners to develop their appreciation and understanding of the connections between the different elements of learning in these qualifications to help make their curriculum meaningful and better prepare them for further education.

The study of IT crosses over many different topics and themes and it's important that learners have the opportunity, early on in the course, to develop their knowledge and understanding of key principles and concepts within this sector.

The mandatory units 1, 2 (and the Extended certificate unit 3), provide this framework for learners to develop this synoptic learning as they explore the fundamentals of IT, the use of information on a global scale and issues around information security and how risks can be minimised. All of these themes will be deepened or broadened in different ways as learners progress through the different internally assessed units within their respective qualification. For example, learners will need to apply security considerations covered in Unit 3 as they consider how to make computer networks safe in Unit 4; they will need to apply their understanding of the use of global information and the benefits to individuals and organisations as they outline potential development projects that could extend the scope of the Internet of Everything in Unit 17. These are just two examples of the synoptic links on offer, but many more do exist.

Of course, being able to apply knowledge and understanding in this way helps learners to develop their appreciation and understanding of the connections between the different elements of learning in these qualifications. You should encourage them to apply their learning across the qualification to help make their curriculum relevant and meaningful, and better prepare them to go on to employment or further study in IT related areas.

Every unit (except Units 1, 2 and 3) will require the learner to apply knowledge from one or more of the mandatory units so that their ability to apply this knowledge synoptically can be assessed. That's why we strongly recommend that learners complete Units 1 and 2 before undertaking assessment in other units and consider carefully where Unit 3 is to be deployed given its important focus on security considerations which learners will find useful as they progress through their qualification.

There will be many opportunities for learners to use the knowledge, understanding and skills in an integrated way and apply aspects they've covered in one unit to other units they're studying. The section below shows how we formally assess synopticity. However, they by no means represent the full extent of the inter-connections that the learner can and should make between different units and areas of content in these qualifications. You'll find that no matter what optional units learners choose, they'll always draw on some fundamental knowledge and understanding from the mandatory units.

Synoptic assessment in the internally assessed units

In the centre-assessed units, there are times when learners have to apply their knowledge and/or understanding from mandatory units 1, 2 and 3 (as relevant to the qualification size being studied). You'll see this synoptic assessment indicated with an asterisk (*), in the grading grid e.g. P1*.

For example, Unit 9 Product development, Pass criterion P2* (Develop a product requirements specification to meet an identified client's requirements) requires the learner to consider ethical and operational systems, legal aspects, the process flow of information and security implications when devising their product requirements specification – all areas of content that have been studied in Units 1, 2 and 3 to varying degrees.

Other opportunities for applying learning across units

It will be possible for learners to make other connections between other units over and above the unit containing the key tasks. We have indicated where these links are by using asterisks in the grading criteria (P1*) in each unit and in an overview in Appendix B.

This may also help with planning teaching and delivery.

7 External assessment

Summary of the externally assessed units

Unit 1 Fundamentals of IT	
90 GLH 1 hour 30 minutes written paper 80 marks OCR set and marked	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• section A comprises multiple choice questions• section B comprises short answer and extended response questions• a calculator may be used
Unit 2 Global information	
90 GLH 1 hour 30 minutes written paper 80 marks OCR set and marked	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• section A comprises short answer and extended response questions based on a pre-released case study. A new case study is released for each examination series and will include research prompts which learners will need to respond to prior to the external assessment.• section B comprises short answer and extended response questions. These questions will not relate to the pre-released case study
Unit 3 Cyber security	
60 GLH 1 hour written paper 60 marks OCR set and marked	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• section A comprises short answer and extended response questions based on a pre-released case study. A new case study is released for each examination series and will focus on either a personal or a corporate perspective. It will also contain a series of research prompts which learners will need to respond to prior to the external assessment• section B comprises short answer and extended response questions and will focus on the theme (i.e. personal or corporate) that is not covered in the pre-released case study

The case studies for Units 2 and 3 will be available from Teach Cambridge eight weeks before the timetabled examination date.

There are two resit opportunities for each examined unit.

Learning Outcome weightings

Each Learning Outcome (LO) in an externally assessed unit is given a percentage weighting. This reflects the size and demand of the content you need to cover and its contribution to the overall understanding of the unit. You'll find the weightings for each LO in the externally assessed units.

How these units are assessed

These units are available as timetabled examinations. We set the dates.

Achievement at unit level is graded as Near-Pass, Pass, Merit or Distinction based on reaching the required grade boundary marks for each externally assessed unit. If a learner doesn't achieve the mark required for a 'Near-Pass' grade we'll issue an unclassified result for that unit.

We will assess these qualifications in accordance with the Regulator's General Conditions of Recognition.

Your centre must provide appropriate assessment facilities for learners that comply with the JCQ [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#).

Availability of external assessment

There are two examination series each year in January and June. You can enter your learners for different units in different exam series. You'll find full details in the [Administration area](#).

Resitting external assessment

Learners can resit an examined unit twice before they complete the qualification. We'll use the best unit result to calculate the certification result.

Your centre must make sure that when arranging resit opportunities you don't adversely affect other assessments being taken.

Arranging a resit opportunity is at your centre's discretion. You should only plan resits if it's clear the learner has taken full advantage of the previous assessment opportunity and formative assessment process.

Reporting suspected malpractice

For more information about suspected malpractice see [section 8](#).

8 Internal assessment

Assignments for internal assessment

We recommend using assignments to assess learners for the internally assessed units.

An assignment has a set of related tasks with a common purpose or work-relevant reason for the learner to apply the knowledge, understanding and skills to achieve a unit. It acts as a stimulus to give learners the opportunity to generate evidence that meets the grading criteria.

The common purpose or work-relevant reason could be a scenario, a case study or brief that sets out the circumstances or reasons for completing the tasks. A scenario could describe the requirements for a solution to a problem (e.g. conducting systems analysis) or a case study could be used to inform a proposal (e.g. a case study relating to a business's computer systems to inform a recommendation for a revised network structure).

You are free to create your own assignments to reflect the local or regional needs that are most relevant to your centre. There are more details in the next section.

We'll provide model assignments for the mandatory units that are internally assessed. Our model assignments can be:

- used as they are to assess your learners
- modified to suit your local or regional environment
- used as a guide to help you design your own assignments.

These qualifications are ideal for delivering through a project-based learning programme so you can carry the project-based approach through to the assessment.

Designing your own assignments for internally assessed units

We provide an assignment checking service for Cambridge Technicals centres. When you use this service, we check that the assignment you've designed covers the grading criteria in the unit and allows every learner to reach the highest grade if they demonstrate they have the associated level of knowledge, understanding and skills. You'll find details of how to request this service on the [Cambridge Technicals](#) page.

When designing assignments you must:

- write tasks in a way that makes it clear to the learner what they must do, don't structure tasks so they give step-by-step instructions, repeat the learning or themes of the learning, or be so prescriptive or detailed that they give the answer to the learner. Tasks must allow the learner to decide how to approach the task (what they do in what order), meaning that they can apply their learning
- set tasks that reflect the command verbs used in the grading criteria. For example, where we ask for an evaluation the task you set must allow for a qualitative judgement to be made, taking into account different factors and using available knowledge, experience and evidence. There is a command verb glossary on the IT qualification page of our website.

- only specify the format of evidence when it's a requirement of the grading criteria or learning outcome. For example, for a unit on marketing where the grading criteria are about messaging, inference and persuasion in text you could ask learners to produce the content of a webpage rather than ask them to create a webpage itself
- avoid the need for excessive amounts of evidence. For example, a report can be a good way to pull together the evidence to meet several grading criteria
- make sure every learner is able to produce their own evidence. For example, if the task is to diagnose a fault in a piece of equipment and learners are given equipment to assess you have to be able to verify that the learner diagnosed the fault themselves. This could mean observing each learner or asking additional questions on how they made the diagnosis. The evidence produced will also need to demonstrate that this is what took place, through the use of witness statements, for example.
- tell learners how long they should expect to spend on each task. This is for guidance. Learners must be allowed sufficient time to complete the tasks. The amount of time will vary depending on the nature of the tasks and the ability of individual learners.
- make sure every learner has access to appropriate resources needed to complete the tasks
- make every effort to make sure materials:
 - support equality and diversity in the language used, in the type of tasks set and in the scenarios provided
 - are free from discrimination and stereotyping of groups or individuals on the basis of, for example, gender, ethnicity, political beliefs, cultural background.

Finally, you don't have to set the same assignment for every learner in the cohort. If a learner has work experience that they can use to generate evidence towards some or all of a unit you can work with the employer to tailor an assignment and enable that to happen. You can also cover more than one unit in an assignment.

Assignments for practice

You **cannot** use assignments you're going to use for summative assessment as practice materials. (Summative assessment is the assessment of learning; it's a measure of a learner's achievement and you use it as the formal assessment of a learner's knowledge, understanding and skills.)

Changing the context of an assignment will help you to manage this. If a unit calls for the learner to do a cost analysis, a practice task will of course ask them to do this. If you've provided the data they need to analyse for practice then change the data for the summative assessment. If the learner has to generate data about a specific product before analysing it, then change the product to one that will generate different data.

Internal assessment and external moderation: a summary of how it works

The key features of assessment and moderation for the internally assessed units are:

- you can create assignments to assess your learners against the requirements of a unit
- if appropriate, assessors can draw on learners' work-based opportunities to generate evidence
- assessment of internally assessed units can take place at a time to suit you and your learners
- work for assessment is centre-assessed and assessment decisions are internally standardised within your centre
- your centre's assessment decisions are externally moderated by one of our visiting moderators.
- if your centre-assessed work doesn't meet the requirements determined by the learning outcomes and grading criteria of the unit(s), the unit grade(s) will be adjusted.

Your centre will need to identify staff that will act as centre assessors. They must have suitable subject knowledge and experience to be able to make judgements about learners' achievements against the grading criteria of the unit.

You must have an effective system set up for recording assessment decisions, including decisions made during internal standardisation. Assessors must record the feedback given to learners.

You should record your comments on the Unit Recording Sheets, which you can download from the qualification webpage. You must make sure assessment records are fully auditable. Our moderator must be able to see, for each unit, evidence of:

- who assessed the learner
- what was assessed, i.e. the unit evidence
- when the assessment took place
- what feedback was given to the learner
- when centre assessment decisions were internally standardised and by whom
- what feedback was given to the assessor, including if they agree with the assessment decision or not (and why), as well as any action points that need addressing prior to submission for moderation and/or recommendations for future consideration.

Centre standardisation

If your centre has a number of staff acting as assessors for these qualifications, you **must** carry out internal standardisation to make sure all learners' work is assessed consistently to the required standard. We have a guide on how internal standardisation may be approached on our webpages for Cambridge Technicals.

If you're the only assessor in your centre for these qualifications, then it's still advisable to make sure your assessment decisions are internally standardised by someone else either in your centre or another centre. This should be someone who has experience of the nature of these qualifications (e.g. is delivering a similar qualification in another subject) or has relevant subject knowledge. You should ask them to review a sample of the assessments. Please note we are not able to provide information or contact details on centres offering these qualifications.

You must keep evidence of your internal standardisation in the centre for the moderator to see.

So there's a consistent approach to internal standardisation, you might decide to nominate an 'Internal Quality Assurer' (IQA).

Whoever is responsible for internal standardisation must make sure all assessors are assessing to the required standard and that all assessment decisions are fair, valid and reliable.

To do this they must:

- advise on interpretation of the standards, including feedback from previous assessments (where relevant)
- co-ordinate assessment practice
- provide advice and support to assessors
- monitor and observe assessment practice to make sure that all assessments are in-line with the required standards
- sample assessments to confirm assessors' judgements across all units and all grades
- make sure feedback is given to all assessors and documented, e.g. records of feedback
- suggest ways in which assessment may be brought into line to meet the required standard
- check that all units and all grades have been included in internal standardisation
- maintain assessment documentation
- organise regular standardisation meetings/activities/events in your centre
- identify assessor development needs
- act as arbitrator for any disagreements in outcomes of assessments, including appeals.

Taking assignments and assessing learners' work

Learners can take assignments for internally assessed units at any time within the study programme. We can moderate your claims for internally assessed units when you're ready.

We'll arrange a date to visit that is suitable for both you and our moderator.

You must plan when you expect your learners to be ready for assessment. Learners can repeat an assignment if they have not performed at their best but you must use your discretion as to whether or not this is in their best interests. We strongly advise that you leave time in your planning in case an assignment needs to be repeated.

Authenticity of learners' work

Every learner must produce their own work independently. You must put in place appropriate mechanisms to make sure that you can be confident that the work you accept as evidence of a learner's achievement is their own.

You must:

- make sure learners and centre assessors understand what constitutes plagiarism and not accept plagiarised work as evidence
- be able to distinguish individual contributions from group work
- use supervision and questioning as appropriate to confirm authenticity
- make sure learners and centre assessors confirm the work is the learner's own.

Plagiarism

Work must be free from plagiarism. Plagiarism is the submission of someone else's work as your own and/or failure to acknowledge a source correctly. Plagiarism makes up majority large percentage of cases of suspected malpractice reported to us by moderators. You must make sure you don't accept plagiarised work as evidence.

In line with the policy and procedures of JCQ on suspected malpractice, the penalties applied for plagiarism would usually result in the claim not being allowed.

Plagiarism often occurs innocently when learners don't know that they must reference or acknowledge their sources, or aren't sure how to do so. It's important to make sure your learners understand:

- the work they submit must be their own
- the meaning of plagiarism and what penalties may be applied
- that they can refer to research, quotations or evidence produced by somebody else but they must list and reference their sources
- quoting someone else's work, even when it's properly sourced and referenced, isn't an indication of understanding. The learner has to 'do' something with that information to show they understand it. For example, if a learner has to analyse data from an experiment, quoting data doesn't show that they understand what it means. The learner has to interpret the data and, by relating it to their assignment, say what they think it means.

Group working

Your learners can work collaboratively or in groups to carry out work towards assessment tasks. However, you must make sure that each learner generates their own individual evidence to show they've met the grading criteria.

When working in a group all learners in the group should have a responsibility and/or a role that gives them the opportunity to generate individual evidence for assessment. For example, if the unit requires learners to plan the organisation of an activity this could be managed in a group discussion. The group discusses ideas for the activity, organisational requirements, roles and responsibilities to complete the activity, etc. All learners must show that they've the skill of planning so **all** members of the group must take part in the discussion. If three members of the group contributed to the discussion and one member took notes but did not contribute to the discussion, their note taking would not be considered a contribution towards planning.

Supervision

We recognise that you might not be able to invigilate or directly supervise every learner as they complete their assignment. Learners can complete their assignments in their own time, at the centre or at home. If you can't supervise, you must use enough checks so you're confident the learner's work is authentic. For example you can use questioning to confirm the depth and breadth of their understanding of the topic they've covered in a specific piece of work.

Use of questioning

Asking a learner questions will help you determine if the work is their own. If you haven't been able to supervise the learner, then asking questions, for example, about how they've done the work, what processes they went through to produce it and how they've related that to the assignment, should give you a clear indication as to whether or not they've done the work themselves.

Learner and centre declaration

All learners must complete a declaration to confirm that the work they've submitted is their own. **They must do this to cover every unit.** We provide a Candidate Authentication Statement for you to use for this purpose. You'll find it on our website.

We'll also ask you to confirm this declaration when making a unit claim.

Feedback to learners

You can discuss work-in-progress towards summative assessment with learners to make sure it's being done in a planned and timely manner. It also provides an opportunity for you to check the authenticity of the work. You must intervene if you feel there's a health and safety risk.

Feedback mustn't provide specific advice and guidance that would be construed as coaching as it would compromise the learner's ability to independently perform the task(s) they are doing and constitutes malpractice.

You can annotate your feedback on the learners' original work submitted for assessment or you can record it in your own separate document (whichever method you use it must be available to our moderator).

Your feedback should:

- be supportive, encouraging and positive
- inform the learner of what you've noticed, not what you think (for example if you have observed the learner completing a task you can describe what happened, what was produced and what was demonstrated).

Your feedback can:

- identify that the learner hasn't met the command verb. For example, 'This is only a description, not an evaluation'
- identify what area of work could be improved but not detail how to improve it. You can remind learners about what they were taught but not how to apply it to improve the work.

Your feedback must not:

- be so detailed that it provides a step-by-step guide on what to do
- coach the learner on how to achieve or complete the task
- provide detail on where to find information/evidence.

In other words, your feedback mustn't tell the learner what they need to do to improve their work. The learner needs to think how to apply their learning and your feedback. You mustn't do the work for them.

Taking an assignment for summative assessment

You must provide your learners with the relevant resources they need to do the assignment. This could include:

- specialist equipment
- software
- people/participants
- practical space.

When learners are working on their evidence you can ask questions about what they're doing to encourage them, make sure they understand what the tasks are and check they're making progress. You can't tell them how to complete the tasks in a way that would be tantamount to doing the work for them. You mustn't coach learners when they're doing their assignment for assessment, as this would give them an unfair advantage. Please see the previous section 'Feedback to learners'.

You should set a realistic date for submitting the assignment, having considered the purpose of the unit and how that might affect timescales. We don't specify what the submission time for the assignment should be – we think it's best to leave this decision to your professional judgement.

What evidence is needed to assess a learner?

The learners' evidence should be in an appropriate format to demonstrate their skills, application of knowledge and understanding as specified in the grading criteria for a unit.

You should discuss with learners what the most suitable sources of evidence are. It isn't the quantity of the evidence they've produced that's important - it's the quality and breadth, that they've produced it themselves, and that it meets the grading criteria.

Evidence could be written work, audio/visual recordings, digitally formatted documents, a product or photographs. Where possible the moderators need to see the actual product rather than screenshots of its creation.

Evidence can come from a number of sources. The main ones are:

- outcomes of assignments, tasks or work-based activities (through projects or real work)
- observation of practice
- responses to questions
- witness statements.

Learners should make sure their work is clearly presented, referenced and ordered to help in the assessment.

The same evidence can contribute to more than one unit as long as it clearly meets the relevant grading criteria. For moderation it must be clear which part of that evidence meets each unit.

Learners mustn't reference another individual's personal details in any evidence produced for summative assessment. It's the learners' responsibility to make sure evidence that includes another individual's personal details is anonymised to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Witness statements

Witness statements can be a useful way of providing supporting evidence where a skill is being used which isn't easily represented in portfolio evidence.

They're supplementary evidence of what the learner has done and are to be used in conjunction with other evidence. For example, a witness statement could support evidence of a learner delivering a presentation alongside the actual presentation and speaker notes.

Witness statements should be suitably detailed, for each learner, to enable the centre assessor and our moderator to determine if the grading criteria have been met. You should use the witness statement template available on our website.

Assessing work for (summative) assessment

Once your learners have completed everything they need to do for their assignment, they must submit their work to you to be assessed. You must be convinced, from the evidence presented, that learners can work independently to the required standard.

You must judge or 'mark' the work against the grading criteria for the unit and identify a grade. Please annotate the work to show where the evidence indicates they've achieved

the grading criteria. Your centre must internally standardise the assessment decisions for the cohort and do this before you give feedback to the learner.

When you're confident the learner has demonstrated that they've met all the requirements of the unit, for at least a Pass grade, you can submit a claim to us for moderation.

You mustn't add, amend or remove any work after it's been submitted to us for final assessment.

Resubmitting work for (summative) assessment

If you and the learner feel they haven't performed at their best during the assessment, the learner can, at your discretion, improve their work and resubmit it to you for assessment. You must be sure it's in the learner's best interests to re-attempt the assessment.

You should set a realistic date for the resubmission of work having considered the purpose of the unit and what the learner intends to improve. You must record the reasons why you've allowed them to resubmit in your centre's assessment decision records. You must also follow our guidelines on giving feedback and record the feedback you give them on the original work. We monitor the assessment decisions you make.

You mustn't encourage multiple re-submissions of work. Re-submission at the centre assessment stage is intended to allow the learner to reflect on feedback and improve, but not to be an iterative process where they make small modifications through on-going feedback to eventually achieve the desired level.

Reporting suspected malpractice

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre¹ to report all cases of suspected malpractice involving centre staff or candidates. A JCQ Report of Suspected Malpractice form (JCQ/M1 for candidate suspected malpractice or JCQ/M2 for staff suspected malpractice) is available to download from the [JCQ website](#) and should be completed as soon as possible and emailed to malpractice@ocr.org.uk.

When asked to do so by OCR, Heads of Centres are required to investigate instances of malpractice promptly and report the outcomes to OCR.

More information about reporting and investigating suspected malpractice and the possible sanctions and penalties which could be imposed, is contained in the [JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures document](#) available from the [JCQ website](#). Centres may also like to refer to the [OCR Website](#) for more details.

¹ This is the most senior officer in the organisation, directly responsible for the delivery of OCR qualifications, e.g. the Head Teacher or Principal of a school/college. The Head of Centre accepts full responsibility for the correct administration and conduct of OCR exams

9 External moderation

An OCR visiting moderator externally moderates your assessment decisions. You have the choice of virtual or face-to-face moderation visits.

For details about moderation visits refer to the [Administration area](#).

External moderation makes sure centres have made the correct assessment decisions. Our moderator will confirm or adjust the grade you've given to a learner's work and provide feedback to you on the decisions they've made.

External moderation of a centre's assessment decisions is achieved through systematic sampling of the work submitted for moderation. The outcome of the sampled moderation will apply to all learners' work submitted for that unit in the claim.

Your centre can have up to two moderation opportunities per academic year (subject to centre activity). We can arrange additional chargeable moderation sessions – for more details refer to the Administration area.

On the basis of the sample taken, our moderator will either **agree** in the main with your centre's assessment decisions or **disagree** with them in relation to particular units.

If the decision is **agree**, your centre's assessment decisions for all learners' work entered for moderation on that occasion, i.e. in the single claim submitted for moderation, will be confirmed by our moderator once moderation is completed.

If the decision is **disagree**, our moderator will provide feedback to your centre. Disagreement is usually down to one of the following:

- work doesn't meet the required standard for the grading criteria claimed by the centre
- assessment in the sample is inconsistent
- some evidence is missing or hasn't been cross-referenced to the grading criteria, so our moderator can't find it
- there's no evidence of assessment having taken place.

Our moderator will prepare a full report that will include comments on the accuracy of assessment and centre actions, if appropriate, for future assessments.

Where the moderator confirms the assessment decisions, they'll submit the claims to us for processing.

10 How to calculate the qualification grade

Grading

Centre-assessed units

These units are assessed by your centre and externally moderated by us.

Each unit has specified grading criteria for Pass, Merit and Distinction.

A summative unit grade can be awarded at Pass, Merit or Distinction:

- to achieve a 'Pass' a learner must have satisfied **all** the 'Pass' grading criteria
- to achieve a 'Merit' a learner must achieve **all** the 'Pass' grading criteria and **all** the 'Merit' grading criteria
- to achieve a 'Distinction' a learner must achieve **all** the 'Pass' grading criteria and **all** the 'Merit' grading criteria and **all** the 'Distinction' criteria.

If a learner doesn't meet all the 'Pass' grading criteria, we issue an unclassified result for that unit.

Externally assessed units

We mark and assess all externally assessed units. We mark each one according to a mark scheme, and the mark will determine the grade awarded ('Near-Pass', 'Pass', 'Merit' or 'Distinction'). We determine grade boundaries for each of the externally assessed units each assessment series. If a learner doesn't achieve the mark required for a 'Near-Pass' grade, we issue an unclassified result for that unit.

Qualification

We grade the overall qualification using a structure of Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction*.

Learners who don't achieve the required units will be unclassified.

If a learner resits an examined unit or resubmits an internally assessed unit, we use the best unit results to calculate the overall grade to make sure they get the best possible grade for their full qualification.

Calculating the qualification grade

To be awarded a full qualification, a learner must achieve the units required for the qualification with at least:

- a Near-Pass grade for the externally assessed units
- a Pass grade for all the internally assessed units.

If they don't do so, they won't be awarded the qualification.

Learners will be awarded a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction* qualification grade determined by the aggregation of points gained through the successful achievement of individual units.

The number of points available for each unit depends on the unit grade achieved.

Points available for unit grade achieved

You'll find full details of unit GLH in 'How these qualifications are structured' in section 4. The table below shows the number of points issued for each grade.

Unit GLH	Points table for units based on GLH				
	Near pass (R)*	Pass	Merit	Distinction	Unclassified
60	12	14	16	18	0
90	18	21	24	27	0

* Near-Pass (R) grade is issued, at unit level, for learners who narrowly miss a Pass on externally assessed units.

Calculating the learner's qualification grade

You'll need to add up all the points for the units the learner has achieved, making sure they've covered the appropriate mandatory and optional units.

Having calculated the total number of points based on the unit grades, you'll check this figure in the qualification grade table for the relevant qualification to identify the overall qualification grade. If a learner doesn't achieve the lowest points score required for the qualification, we issue an unclassified result.

Example A

Learner A has taken the units required for the Extended Certificate.

The calculation would be:

Unit	GLH	Grade	Number of points
1	90	Pass	= 21 points
2	90	Merit	= 24 points
3	60	Merit	= 16 points
8	60	Distinction	= 18 points
9	60	Pass	= 14 points
Total GLH	360	Total number of points	= 93 points

In this example, Learner A has an overall qualification grade of a Merit.

Example B

Learner B has taken the units required for the Extended Certificate.

The calculation would be:

Unit	GLH	Grade	Number of points
1	90	Distinction	= 27 points
2	90	Merit	= 24 points
3	60	Merit	= 16 points
11	60	Unclassified	= 0 points
17	60	Distinction	= 18 points
Total GLH	360	Total number of points	= 85 points

In this example, while Learner B has enough points to be eligible for a qualification they wouldn't be awarded it because they haven't achieved at least a Pass for Unit 11.

Example C

Learner C has taken the units required for the Extended Certificate.

The calculation would be:

Unit	GLH	Grade	Number of points
1	90	Merit	= 24 points
2	90	Merit	= 24 points
3	60	Near-Pass	= 12 points
11	60	Merit	= 16 points
17	60	Distinction	= 18 points
Total GLH	360	Total number of points	= 94 points

In this example, Learner C has an overall qualification grade of Merit.

Qualification grade table OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate (180 GLH)

The table below shows the points ranges and the grades that those ranges achieve.

Points range	Grade	
52 and above	Distinction*	D*
50 – 51	Distinction	D
46 – 49	Merit	M
36 – 45	Pass	P
Below 36	Unclassified	U

Qualification grade table OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate (360 GLH)

The table below shows the points ranges and the grades that those ranges achieve.

Points range	Grade	
104 and above	Distinction*	D*
100 – 103	Distinction	D
92 – 99	Merit	M
72 – 91	Pass	P
Below 72	Unclassified	U

11 Certificate and results

Claim a qualification

For the internally assessed units there are no specific deadlines for claiming the units. However, it's important to make claims only when you're confident the learner has met the requirements for the unit.

For examined units, the assessment is time-tabled and we'll issue results according to the schedule given in the [Administration area](#).

We can only award a qualification and issue a certificate for it once the learner has achieved all the units required for the qualification they've been entered for.

You shouldn't make a claim unless, in the final opinion of your centre, the evidence meets the requirements for certification.

Certificates

We'll put the regulated qualification titles and numbers on learners' certificates.

We'll issue a certificate confirming achievement of the qualification directly to your centre for successful learners. This is an automated process, you don't need to claim or 'cash-in' a full qualification.

Unit certificates will not be issued as standard; however, a unit certificate can be requested by the centre. The unit certificate will be free of charge providing it is claimed within 2 years (24 months) of the Learner being entered for the qualification.

If a learner can't complete the full qualification you can print a candidate achievement report showing individual unit results, from OCR Interchange, or you can make a specific request for unit certificates.

Refer to the [Administration area](#), certificates, for full details.

Replacement certificates

For details on replacement certificates, refer to the Administration area, certificates.

Review of results

Under certain circumstances, you may wish to query the result(s) issued to one or more learners.

To find out more about this, please refer to the **JCQ Post-Results Services** document and the Administration area, post results services.

12 Administration and other information

For information on how to administer these qualifications, please follow the link to OCR's [Administration area](#).

You will find all the details about how the qualifications run, what you need to do and when. It covers everything from becoming an OCR centre, to making entries, claiming certificates, special arrangements and contacting us for advice.

Collecting evidence of learner performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system

Regulators have published guidance on collecting evidence of learner performance as part of long-term contingency arrangements to improve the resilience of the qualifications system. You should review and consider this guidance when delivering these qualifications to learners at your centre.

For more detailed information on collecting evidence of learner performance please visit our [website](#).

Avoidance of bias

We've taken great care in preparing these qualifications to avoid bias of any kind. We've given special focus to the eight strands of the Equality Act with the aim of making sure both direct and indirect discrimination are avoided.

Accessibility

There can be adjustments to standard assessment arrangements on the basis of the individual needs of learners.

It's important that you identify as early as possible whether learners have disabilities or particular difficulties that will put them at a disadvantage in the assessment situation and choose a qualification or adjustment that allow them to demonstrate attainment.

The responsibility for providing adjustments to assessment is shared between your centre and us. Please read the JCQ document [Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments](#).

If you have learners who need a post-examination adjustment to reflect temporary illness, indisposition or injury at the time the assessment was taken, please read the JCQ document **A guide to the special consideration process**.

There's more guidance on access arrangements and special consideration on OCR [Administration, preparation](#).

If you think any aspect of these qualifications unfairly restricts access and progression, please email or call our Customer Support Centre.

13 Contacting us

Feedback and enquiries

We aim to provide consistently great customer service and your feedback is invaluable in helping us to achieve our goal. For questions about our qualifications, products and services, please contact the [Customer Support Centre](#). To leave your feedback on the OCR website, people and processes please use our [feedback form](#).

Telephone: 01223 553998
Email: support@ocr.org.uk

You could also visit [OCR's website](#) for more information about our qualifications.

Complaints

We are committed to providing a high quality service but understand that sometimes things can go wrong. We welcome your comments and want to resolve your complaint as efficiently as possible. To make a complaint please follow the process set out on our [website](#).

Appendix A Performance descriptors

Pass

Learners will be able to demonstrate a good level of knowledge of basic IT concepts. Learners will be able to draw on the knowledge that they have acquired through the learning process to identify and recall facts and characteristics associated with these IT concepts, using limited terminology.

Learners will make some basic attempt to apply their knowledge to vocational contexts provided - mostly familiar in nature - and the points they make will often be independent of each other. Points made may be superficial in nature.

There may be an inherent weakness in the ability of learners to move from giving an account of a particular issue to explaining the reason or purpose behind a specific course of action.

The supporting narrative that learners provide in assessments requiring an extended response will be limited in scope and may consist of a number of unrelated points which will be simplistic in nature and may lack relevance in relation to the contexts provided.

Any judgements made will be largely superficial and will lack any supporting commentary. There will be little evidence of building an argument, which will often result in a number of unconnected, basic statements.

Arguments may be obscurely presented and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling may be noticeable and intrusive.

Merit

Learners will be able to demonstrate a reasonable knowledge of both basic and, to some degree, complex IT concepts, and be familiar with their use. Learners will be able to build on the knowledge base they have acquired through the learning process to demonstrate a reasonable understanding of these IT concepts, using a good level of terminology.

Learners will be able to apply their knowledge and, to some extent their understanding to vocational contexts provided – especially familiar and to a lesser extent unfamiliar and the points they make will start to make connections, drawing out various themes and implications from information supplied and their own frame of reference, although some opportunities for development will be missed. Responses on the whole will contain sufficient breadth but may on occasion lack depth.

There will be a strength in the ability of learners to explain the reason or purpose behind a specific course of action although learners will at times find analysing the consequences or implications from different viewpoints more problematic, resulting in a more inconsistent approach to the demonstration of higher level skills.

The supporting narrative that learners provide in assessments requiring an extended response will cover the majority of requirements and will consist of a number of arguments although some of these arguments may remain undeveloped and not consistently aligned with the context provided. Examples will be used to support points made.

Any judgements made will be sound and will be backed up by a well-developed commentary. There will be some evidence of building an argument supported by clear, logical statements.

Writing will be generally fluent, with an emerging sense of style and well-structured sentences and paragraphs. Points are mostly relevant and are explained using some appropriate terminology as the argument progresses. There are occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Distinction

Learners will be able to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of both basic and complex IT concepts and will be familiar with their use. Learners will be able to build on the knowledge base they have acquired through the learning process to demonstrate a clear understanding of these IT concepts, using sophisticated and accurate terminology.

Learners will be comfortable applying their knowledge and understanding to vocational contexts provided – both familiar and unfamiliar and the points they make will be interlinked, drawing out various themes and implications from information supplied and from their own frame of reference, resulting in responses that contain real breadth and depth.

There will be a strength in the ability of learners to move from explaining the reason or purpose behind a specific course of action to analysing the consequences or implications from more than one viewpoint of taking these actions.

The supporting narrative that learners provide in assessments requiring an extended response will be comprehensive in scope and will consist of a number of developed arguments which will be backed up by clear, relevant examples directly related to the contexts provided.

Any judgements made will be wholly appropriate and will be backed up by a well-developed and well-reasoned commentary. There will be strong evidence of building an argument supported by relevant, sophisticated statements.

Learners will express complex ideas clearly and fluently. Sentences and paragraphs follow on from one another smoothly and logically. Arguments will be consistently well structured. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation or spelling.

Appendix B Opportunities for applying learning across units

Unit:	Links to unit and Learning Outcome (LO):	
8	1	LO4: Understand employability and communication skills used in an IT environment LO5: Understand ethical and operational issues and threats to computer systems
	2	LO4: Understand the legal and regulatory framework governing the storage and use of global information LO6: Understand the principles of information security
	3	LO1: Understand what is meant by cyber security
9	1	LO4: Understand employability and communication skills used in an IT environment LO5: Understand ethical and operational issues and threats to computer systems
	2	LO5: Understand the process flow of information LO6: Understand the principles of information security
	3	LO1: Understand what is meant by cyber security LO2: Understand the issues surrounding cyber security LO3: Understand measures used to protect against cyber security incidents
11	1	LO1: Understand computer hardware LO2: Understand computer software LO3: Understand business IT systems LO4: Understand employability and communication skills used in an IT environment LO5: Understand ethical and operational issues and threats to computer systems
	2	LO1: Understand where information is held globally and how it is transmitted LO2: Understand the styles, classification and the management of global information LO3: Understand the use of global information and the benefits to individuals and organisations LO4: Understand the legal and regulatory framework governing the storage and use of global information LO5: Understand the process flow of information
	3	LO2: Understand the issues surrounding cyber security LO3: Understand measures used to protect against cyber security incidents
17	1	LO1: Understand computer hardware LO2: Understand computer software LO3: Understand business IT systems LO4: Understand employability and communication skills used in an IT environment
	2	LO1: Understand where information is held globally and how it is transmitted LO3: Understand the use of global information and the benefits to individuals and organisations LO4: Understand the legal and regulatory framework governing the storage and use of global information
	3	LO2: Understand the issues surrounding cyber security LO3: Understand measures used to protect against cyber security incidents

Appendix C Key updates to this handbook

Section	Title of section	Change	Versions and Date
12	Collecting evidence of learner performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system – new section added	New section added	Version 8 March 2024
Throughout		Hyperlinks updated	Version 7 January 2023
9	External moderation	Added - You have the choice of virtual or face-to-face moderation visits.	
Throughout		Hyperlinks updated	Version 6 May 2021
2	Qualification size	TQT information added	
	Availability and Funding	Updated information and hyperlinks	
3	Qualification resources, support and useful links	Updated information about Skills Guides, the assignment checking service and Professional Development. Removed reference to the Online Community	
5 and 8	Centre and centre assessor responsibilities	Reference to the Data Protection Act updated	
	Internal assessment and external moderation: a summary of how it works		
10	Contacting OCR	Contact details updated	
1	Qualifications at a glance	Updated sections to reflect the introduction of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the near-pass unit grade for examined units the unit point values for the near-pass grade the new minimum number of points required for the qualification grade at Pass. the additional resit opportunity for examined units 	Version 5 December 2018
7	Summary of the externally assessed units, How these units are assessed, Resitting external assessment		
10	Externally assessed units, Qualification, Calculating the qualification grade, Qualification Grade tables		
All sections		Amended reference from the Admin Guide to the new Administration area on the OCR website and refreshed all hyperlinks.	

1	Qualification overview	Externally assessed units amended to show Unit 1, 2, 3, CC (formerly Unit 25)	Version 4 December 2016
7	External Assessment	Unit 3 section A amended to advise that the pre-release document will also contain a series of research prompts which learners will need to respond to prior to the external assessment	
1	Qualification overview	Now includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size and purpose at a glance • Qualification at a glance 	Version 3 September 2016
2	Qualification size How are these qualifications assessed? Funding	Updated information and links	
3	Managed Assessment Portfolio System (MAPS)	Removed	
5	Prior knowledge and experience	Updated information	
8	Internal assessment	Updated and added Reporting suspected malpractice	

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