ESSENTIAL SKILLS WALES

ADMIN GUIDE

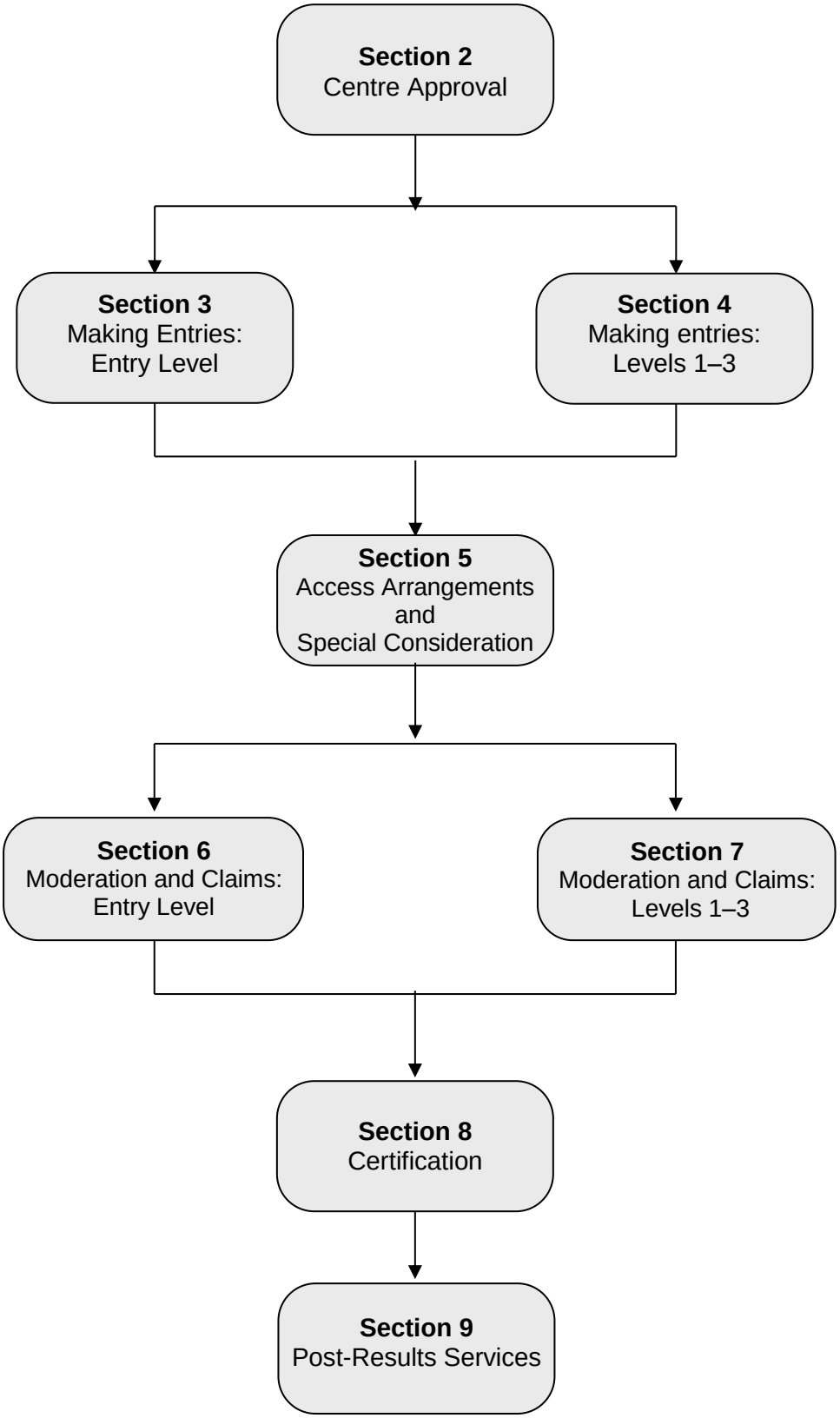
2014/15

SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Overview

This document is structured in chronological order of activity. Each box in the flow chart below corresponds to a section in this *Guide*.



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Version control

This page lists all changes to this *Admin Guide* since publication on the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk/admin-guides. See Section 1.2 for details of how we communicate any changes to centres.

The latest version of this guide is v.1.0 published on 12 September 2014.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and scope of the *Admin Guide*

The purpose of this *Admin Guide* is to assist exams officers and teachers within registered OCR centres with the administration of OCR Essential Skills Wales qualifications. This document should be read in conjunction with the Essential Skills Wales standards produced by DfE, JCQ guidance and the OCR centre handbooks for each qualification.

This *Admin Guide* is available to download from the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk).

1.2 Changes to this *Admin Guide*

The first version of this *Admin Guide* is v1.0, published online September 2014.

All qualifications within this *Guide* have an accreditation period assigned to them, which means that they have a start date and an end date. We publish a monthly guide to our vocational qualifications which are approaching last entry or last certification date within the next six months. It is important that centres check this document regularly for updates. The guide can be downloaded from the OCR website.

If there are any subsequent changes or additions to this *Admin Guide*, OCR will update the online version, available to download from the OCR website.

Any changes will be clearly identified on the version control page in the *Admin Guide* (the page prior to the contents page) and the version number will be updated accordingly in the footer.

OCR will also notify centres of any amendments to this *Admin Guide* in our monthly *Subject Information Update* email.

1.3 What is Essential Skills Wales?

Essential Skills Wales is a suite of qualifications that replaced the Key Skills qualifications in Communication, Application of Number and ICT, and the Basic Skills qualifications in Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy, in Wales. Qualifications in the suite are available from Entry Level through to Level 3.

Essential Skills Wales are applicable to all programmes, ages, abilities and contexts and support the effectiveness of learning and performance both in education and at work. They are therefore appropriate for a variety of candidates at all levels.

Following the Welsh Government's decision to withdraw Essential Skills Wales qualifications from the Welsh baccalaureate, OCR have decided not to participate in the future redevelopment of Essential Skills Wales. OCR will, therefore, be withdrawing from provision of both Essential Skills Wales and OCR Wider Key Skills when the Welsh Government pilots the new qualifications in September 2015. **This means that the last date for entry for both suites of qualifications will be 31 August 2015** (see Section 10).

OCR will continue to offer a wide range of skills-based qualifications covering a variety of life and work skills, including Cambridge Progression and Cambridge Employability. For further details, please visit the OCR website.

Forms of assessment

The Entry Level qualifications and Levels 1–3 qualifications have different methods of assessment and moderation.

To achieve an **Entry Level Essential Skills Wales qualification** in Communication, Application of Number or ICT, candidates must complete an OCR-set assignment (available on OCR Interchange), which is internally assessed in the centre and sent by post to an OCR moderator for moderation. Candidates can take the assignment at any time.

To achieve a **Level 1–3 Essential Skills Wales qualification** in Communication, Application of Number or ICT, candidates must successfully complete a portfolio of evidence. The portfolio is internally assessed and moderated, and then externally moderated by an OCR visiting moderator.

1.4 What are Wider Key Skills?

The Levels 1–3 Essential Skills Wales qualifications can be used together with the Wider Key Skills qualifications of Improving Own Learning and Performance, Problem Solving and Working with Others, allowing learners to prove their ability to use certain transferable skills, equipping them for the workplace and further education. There are three Wider Key Skills qualifications, which are all available at Levels 1 to 4.

- Improving Own Learning and Performance
- Problem Solving
- Working with Others.

The Wider Key Skills are assessed through an internally assessed portfolio (see the guidance in Section 7). See Section 10 for entry codes and information about accessing the Wider Key Skills at a reduced fee.

Please note that following the Welsh Government's decision to withdraw Essential Skills Wales qualifications from the Welsh baccalaureate, **the last date for entry for Wider Key Skills qualifications will be 31 August 2015** (see Section 10).

1.5 Qualification update

Apprenticeships

Essential Skills Wales qualifications are component qualifications for various Apprenticeship Frameworks in Wales.

For further information on OCR's Apprenticeships, please see the OCR website. For more information on Apprenticeship frameworks, please see the National Apprenticeship Service website at www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

1.6 Obtaining further support and information

A glossary of common terms has been provided at the end of this *Admin Guide*, together with a list of where to obtain copies of documents referred to within the *Guide*.

OCR website

The best way to obtain up-to-date information is via the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk. The website includes essential support materials such as centre handbooks, sample portfolios and datasheets, together with details about entries, results and fees. New administrative and qualification information is added regularly.

Interchange

Interchange (https://interchange.ocr.org.uk) is a free, secure website that has been developed to help exams officers and teachers carry out day-to-day administrative functions online quickly and efficiently. The site allows you to check your approval status, make and view entries and claims, view achievements and access external verifier and feedback reports. As Interchange is updated daily, it is always the place to view the most accurate information. In order to use Interchange for the first time, you just need to register your centre by returning the Interchange Agreement. This can be downloaded from the OCR website.

OCR support and training

OCR's Customer Support Team offers free training specifically for groups of exams officers, as well as attending network meetings. To find out more about the training we can offer to give you more confidence in administering OCR qualifications, or to invite us to your network meetings, please see www.ocr.org.uk/examsofficers or email the team at cast@ocr.org.uk.

We also offer professional development for teachers. You can find out what professional development is available for each qualification by accessing the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk/professionaldevelopment. Our professional development includes online training, a series of premier events and face-to-face training for coursework and controlled assessment units.

If you would like more information, please contact us at professionaldevelopment@ocr.org.uk.

Community

Our social network site enables teachers to share best practice, offer guidance and upload and access a range of support materials such as lesson plans, presentations, videos and links to other helpful sites. Visit www.social.ocr.org.uk to find out more.

1.7 Contacting OCR

For general enquiries and queries relating to the administration of **Entry Level** Essential Skills Wales qualifications, please contact the **OCR Customer Contact Centre**:

Telephone: 024 7685 1509 (08:00–17:30 Monday to Friday)
Fax: 024 7685 1633
Email: vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk
(Please include centre name and number in the email.)
Post: OCR, Westwood Way, Coventry, CV4 8JQ

For enquiries relating to the administration of **Levels 1–3** Essential Skills Wales qualifications and **Wider Key Skills** qualifications, please contact the **OCR Customer Contact Centre:**

Telephone: 02476 851509 (08:00–17:30 Monday to Friday)
Fax: 02476 851633
Email: EssentialSkillsWales@ocr.org.uk
(Please include centre name and number in the email.)
Post: OCR, Westwood Way, Coventry, CV4 8JQ

For email communications, please note that we may not be able to provide specific information unless a centre email address (and not a personal email address) is used. When providing your contact details, please ensure that the email address you provide is either the main email address of the centre or the email address of the person responsible for the administration of exams. Personal email addresses should not be used.

2 Centre Approval

2.1 What is centre approval?

If you want to offer OCR Essential Skills Wales qualifications, you must first gain approval from OCR. You will only be able to enter candidates for the qualifications that you are approved to offer. In addition, approval is subject to continued centre activity; if there are no entries or certifications for a qualification for three consecutive years, centre approval will automatically lapse for that qualification.

2.2 Applying for centre approval

To apply for centre approval, you need to complete an application form. The form, together with guidance on completing it, is available from the centre approval section of the OCR website. The form asks for general information about the centre and for more specific details about the way the centre will deliver the qualifications for which it seeks approval. Forms should be sent via email to opsvrqteam@ocr.org.uk or via post to the address on the form. When OCR approves each application, you will receive a letter of confirmation. You can then enter candidates for the qualifications that you are approved to offer (see Sections 3 and 4).

All changes of centre address should be sent to the NCN Team, Coventry, on centre-headed paper. If a visit is required, we will contact you to arrange this.

2.3 Credit checking

If you are a company, sole trader or partnership, we have a credit checking process in place to help us verify your credit worthiness. You need to have been established, and trading on credit terms, for a minimum of six months and be able to supply us with two credit references (banks, solicitors and accountants are not considered as trade creditors and cannot be used as referees).

If you cannot satisfy these requirements then we will be unable to process your application; however, we can review your application after six months of trading. If you cannot satisfy these requirements but think there are extenuating circumstances, please email the details to the Customer Contact Centre at vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk.

3 Making Entries: Entry Level

Key points

- Centres make entries for Entry Level qualifications via Interchange only.
- All Essential Skills Wales qualifications (at all levels) are full award, single-unit qualifications.
- It is essential that entry information is correct to ensure that candidates receive their certificates.
- **We do not allow entry withdrawals or transfers for any Essential Skills Wales qualifications.**

3.1 What are candidate entries?

In order to let OCR know which qualifications your candidates wish to take and before you can claim qualifications for candidates, you need to make entries.

All Essential Skills Wales qualifications are single-unit, full award qualifications. Therefore, you can only make full award entries.

Entry routes

For Entry Level Essential Skills Wales qualifications, entries can be made via either the named route or the unnamed route.

- **Named** – This is where you provide specific candidate information (e.g. name and date of birth) for each qualification (see Section 3.4).
- **Unnamed** – This allows you to order a number of qualifications in bulk, without specifying who will be taking them (see Section 3.5).

3.2 Entry deadlines

Candidates can be entered for Essential Skills Wales qualifications on an on-going basis – there are no specific entry deadlines and entries are processed within 24 to 48 hours.

Please note that the last date for entry for Wider Key Skills qualifications will be 31 August 2015 (see Section 10).

3.3 Entry fees

Details of the entry fees for all OCR qualifications can be found in the OCR Fees List, which can be downloaded from the OCR website. Invoices will be sent (normally via email) to your accounts contact once you have made your entries.

Querying a fees invoice

To query an invoice, please forward a copy of the invoice and supporting documentation (quoting your centre number and invoice number in all correspondence) to OCR Sales Ordering, Finance Division, OCR, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU. Alternatively, you can fax 01223 553048 or email creditcontrol@cambridgeassessment.org.uk.

3.4 Information required to make named entries

Qualification details

All Essential Skills Wales qualifications are single-unit, full award qualifications. Therefore, centres provide entry codes of the **full qualification(s)** only – unit entry codes are not applicable.

Please ensure you select the correct entry code for the qualification you would like to enter for (see Section 10).

Candidate personal details

Centres provide candidate names and dates of birth. You should enter candidates under names that can be verified by the presentation of suitable identification, such as a birth certificate, passport or driver's licence. This ensures that there will be no delay or confusion when candidates subsequently present their results documentation to employers or tertiary institutions. Also, if candidates apply to OCR for additional or replacement copies of their results, they must be able to provide identification that matches the archived information.

Centre candidate number

An optional field for named qualifications, this number can be allocated by a centre if you wish to add an additional reference; it can be up to four digits long.

OCR candidate number

This is an eight-digit number allocated by OCR which allows candidates' units to be linked together when claiming for multiple units or full awards. For candidates entering for OCR qualifications for the first time, this should be left blank. If the candidate has a previous OCR candidate number, you should provide this to avoid additional numbers being generated.

Order number

The order number is an optional field which will be quoted on your centre's invoice. It can be either an official order number or simply a reference, e.g. a teacher or tutor's name. It is good practice to provide an order number as this enables invoices to be matched to your entries easily. You can use the same order number for as many entry submissions as you wish.

3.5 Information required to make unnamed entries

For the unnamed route, you simply need to specify the number of full-award entries that you would like for each qualification.

The unnamed entry route is only available for **Entry Level** Essential Skills Wales qualifications. You cannot submit unnamed entries for Levels 1–3 Essential Skills Wales qualifications.

3.6 Method of submitting entries at Entry Level

Candidates for Essential Skills Wales Entry Level qualifications can be entered using **Interchange only**. If you cannot make entries via Interchange or are having problems making entries via this method, please contact the Customer Contact Centre.

Interchange is OCR's secure extranet (https://interchange.ocr.org.uk). If your centre is new to Interchange and does not currently have an Interchange account, please complete and return the Interchange Agreement, which can be downloaded from the OCR website, to receive your login details. If your centre has an account but you are a new user, or your existing account needs to be updated, please contact your Centre Administrator (usually the exams officer). If you are unsure whether your centre is registered or you cannot locate your Centre Administrator, please email the Customer Support Team at cast@ocr.org.uk.

3.7 Making entries using Interchange at Entry Level

Additional information for making entries via Interchange is provided on the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk/interchange. The step-by-step guide *Making online entries for Essential Skills Wales (ESW) via Interchange* is available on the OCR website.

To make entries via Interchange, log in to the system, hover over 'Entries' in the left-hand menu and click on 'Make entries'. Then click on the category entitled 'Vocationally related qualifications (including Entry Level, Text Processing)'. You then have a choice: you can either upload a spreadsheet or use a web-based form.

Named entries: uploading a spreadsheet

This method is ideal if you have large numbers of candidates. Click on 'Upload vocational entries spreadsheet' and then download and save the spreadsheet template. Read the instructions by clicking on the help link and then populate the spreadsheet with the information described in Section 3.4 – either manually or by importing data from your management information system.

When you are ready to make your entries, click on 'Browse' to find your saved spreadsheet, add an order number or reference in the box provided and then click on 'Submit entries spreadsheet'.

Interchange will automatically validate the contents and highlight any errors it finds, allowing you to correct these before submitting the spreadsheet to OCR. This allows you to ensure that all the information is correct before it reaches us, which in turn helps us prevent any unnecessary delays in processing your entries.

Named and unnamed entries: using a web-based form

This method is useful if your candidates already exist on Interchange or you only have a few candidates to enter. This is also the method you use to make unnamed entries (you cannot make unnamed entries using the spreadsheet).

For **Entry Level** qualifications, you can submit either named or unnamed entries. To submit entries for Entry Level qualifications using the web-based form, click on the relevant web-based entry form link (either named or unnamed, depending on your preferred entry route).

For both routes, you will be asked to select your assessment. You can find your assessment by entering the assessment code, title or part title in the search box. If you leave the search box blank, all the vocational qualifications for which you are approved will appear in the dropdown list. Select the qualification you require and click 'OK'. The process will then vary depending on which entry route you have chosen:

- **Named entries:** Next, you need to select your candidates. You can do this by choosing individual candidates or whole candidate groups. (These groups can be created within Interchange and tailored to include candidates of your choice. To create a bespoke candidate group, log in to Interchange, hover over 'Candidates' in the left hand menu and click on 'Candidate groups'.) You should select existing candidates rather than creating new ones; however, if you cannot find a candidate, you can enter their details. When searching for existing candidates, you can restrict the search to show only candidates added during a given time period, from 'today' to 'in the last five years'.

  Once you have selected your candidates, click 'Next'. You will then be asked to select your entry options. Select 'full award' for all candidates, (unit entries are not valid for Essential Skills Wales qualifications) ensuring all candidates are 'ticked' before clicking on 'Apply to selected'. Click 'Next' to review your entries and add an order number before clicking on 'Submit entries' to confirm your entries.

- **Unnamed entries (Entry Level only):** If you have chosen the unnamed web-based form, once you have selected your assessment, you need to enter the number of full award entries you'd like before clicking on 'Add'. Once you have added these entries, you will be given the opportunity to add more entries to this order. When you have finished adding entries, click 'Next'. You should then add an order number and click 'Submit entries' to confirm your entries.

3.8 Viewing entries

You can view all entry information within Interchange. To access this area, hover over 'Entries' in the left-hand menu and then click on 'Entry submission history'. Click on the 'Vocationally related qualifications (including Entry Level, Text Processing)' heading – from here, you can view details of all named and unnamed entries.

If you've submitted your entries using the web-based form, click on the 'View named vocationally related qualifications entry submission history' link. You will then see a list of all named entries, with the most recent at the top of the list. You can filter the results by selecting a date range and order number (if applicable). To view the entries, click on 'View details' in the 'Action' column.

If you've submitted your entries using the spreadsheet, click on the 'Uploaded spreadsheets' tab. You will then see a list of all named entries submitted by spreadsheet, with the most recent at the top of the list. An 'entry status' will be visible for each entry. The status will indicate whether you need to take any action to help us process your entries successfully. Descriptions of each of the status messages (including any action required) are given in the table below.

Status	Description	Action required?
Duplicate file	The spreadsheet could not be processed as it contains duplicate entries	Please call the OCR Customer Contact Centre to resolve this issue

Status	Description	Action required?
Empty file	The spreadsheet does not contain any details	Please check and upload the spreadsheet again
OCR handling this	We are currently resolving the outstanding issues with the spreadsheet	None required
Processing complete	The spreadsheet has been successfully uploaded and processed	None required
Processing in progress	We are currently resolving any issues with the spreadsheet	None required
Read and recognised	The spreadsheet has been successfully uploaded and is currently being processed	None required
Read and rejected	The spreadsheet is incorrectly formatted or there was a problem processing the file	Please call the OCR Customer Contact Centre to resolve this issue
Upload failed	The spreadsheet could not be uploaded	Please check and upload the spreadsheet again

3.9 Amending or withdrawing entries

If you need to update candidates' personal details, e.g. name or date of birth (see Section 3.4), you can make the changes via Interchange. If you wish to change a candidate's whole name (rather than correct a spelling mistake), you will also need to send proof of the candidate's name change to OCR Operations by emailing opsvrqteam@ocr.org.uk.

It is not possible to withdraw an entry. We will not refund any named or unnamed entry fees where the entry has been made in error.

4 Making Entries: Levels 1–3

Key points

- Centres make entries for Levels 1–3 qualifications via Interchange or A2C.
- Entries for Levels 1–3 qualifications must be made via the named route.
- All Essential Skills Wales qualifications (at all levels) are full award, single-unit qualifications.
- It is essential that entry information is correct to ensure that candidates receive their certificates.
- Information provided *must* also include the initials of the lead centre assessor for each candidate.
- **We do not allow entry withdrawals or transfers for any Essential Skills Wales qualifications.**

4.1 What are candidate entries?

In order to let OCR know which qualifications your candidates wish to take and before you can claim qualifications for candidates, you need to make entries.

All Essential Skills Wales qualifications are single-unit qualifications; therefore, you can only make full award entries. For Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3, a full award entry covers all three levels of the qualification:

- OCR Essential Skills Wales in Communication (Levels 1–3)
- OCR Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number (Levels 1–3)
- OCR Essential Skills Wales in Information and Communication Technology (Levels 1–3).

Although the entry covers all three levels of the qualification, you can only claim the qualification at one level for a candidate per submission. For example, you cannot claim Level 1 ICT and Level 2 ICT for a candidate in the same submission. Therefore, when you submit your claim (see Section 7), you must only select the award at the level you wish to claim for.

Entry route

For Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3, entries **must** be made via the named route. This is where you provide specific candidate information (e.g. name and date of birth) for each qualification (see Section 4.4).

We cannot accept entries for Levels 1–3 via the unnamed route.

Entry types

There are two types of qualification entry for Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3.

You can enter for **all three Essential Skills Wales qualifications** at Levels 1–3 using one overarching entry code (see Section 10). This entitles a candidate to:

- Take each of the three Essential Skills Wales qualifications at any level (Levels 1–3)

- Moderation of portfolio evidence
- Certification.

Alternatively, you can enter for **each Essential Skills Wales qualification individually** at Levels 1–3. This entitles a candidate to:

- Take that individual qualification at any level (Levels 1–3)
- Moderation of portfolio evidence
- Certification.

Please ensure you select the correct entry code for the qualification entry type (see Section 10).

4.2 Entry deadlines

Candidates can be entered for Essential Skills Wales qualifications on an on-going basis – there are no specific entry deadlines and entries are processed within 24 to 48 hours.

Please note that the last date for entry for Wider Key Skills qualifications will be 31 August 2015 (see Section 10).

However, for candidates who require their Essential Skills Wales results in time for submission of the results for the Welsh Baccalaureate, please see Section 7.1.

4.3 Entry fees

Details of the entry fees for all OCR qualifications can be found in the OCR Fees List, which can be downloaded from the OCR website. Invoices will be sent (normally via email) to your accounts contact once you have made your entries.

Querying a fees invoice

To query an invoice, please forward a copy of the invoice and supporting documentation (quoting your centre number and invoice number in all correspondence) to OCR Sales Ordering, Finance Division, OCR, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU. Alternatively, you can fax 01223 553048 or email creditcontrol@cambridgeassessment.org.uk.

4.4 Information required to make named entries

Qualification details

All Essential Skills Wales qualifications are single-unit, full award qualifications. Therefore, centres provide entry codes of the **full qualification(s)** only – unit entry codes are not applicable.

Please ensure you select the correct entry code for the qualification you'd like to enter for (see Section 10).

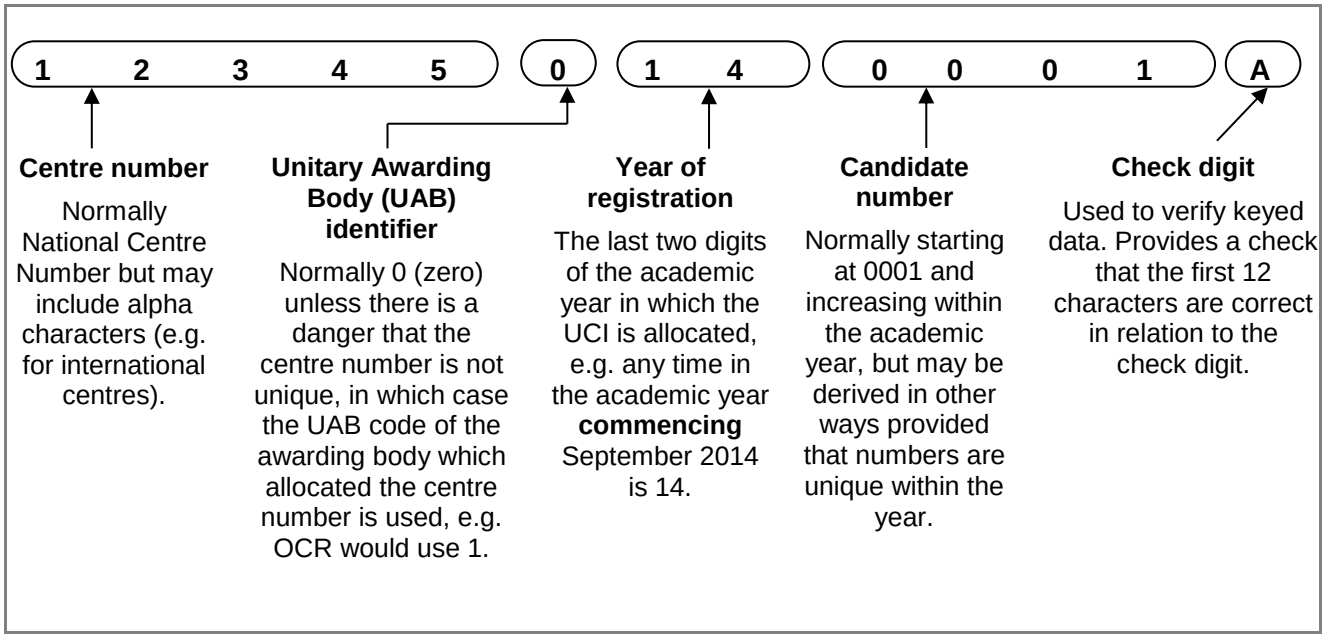
Candidate personal details

You should provide candidate names and dates of birth. You should enter candidates under names that can be verified by the presentation of suitable identification, such as a birth certificate, passport or driver's licence. This ensures that there will be no delay or confusion when candidates subsequently present their results documentation to employers or tertiary institutions. Also, if candidates apply to OCR for additional or replacement copies of their results, they must be able to provide identification that matches the archived information.

Unique candidate identifier (UCI)

This 13-character code must accompany a candidate's entry if you wish to make entries via A2C.

The following diagram shows the components of a UCI. Exam administration software packages will usually be able to generate UCIs. Please check with your software provider:



Centre candidate number

An optional field for named qualifications, this number can be allocated by a centre if you wish to add an additional reference; it can be up to four digits long.

OCR candidate number

This is an eight-digit number allocated by OCR which allows candidates' units to be linked together when claiming for multiple units or full awards. For candidates entering for OCR qualifications for the first time, this should be left blank. If the candidate has a previous OCR candidate number, you should provide this to avoid additional numbers being generated.

Order number

The order number is an optional field which will be quoted on your centre's invoice. It can be either an official order number or simply a reference, e.g. a teacher or tutor's name. It is good practice to provide an order number as this enables invoices to be matched to your entries easily. You can use the same order number for as many entry submissions as you wish.

4.5 Methods of submitting entries at Levels 1–3

There are two methods of entering candidates for Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3. If you cannot make entries via either of these methods, or are having problems, please call the Customer Contact Centre.

- **Interchange** – OCR's secure extranet (https://interchange.ocr.org.uk). If your centre is new to Interchange and does not currently have an Interchange account, please complete and return the Interchange Agreement, which can be downloaded from the OCR website, to receive your login details. If your centre has an account but you are a new user, or your existing account needs to be updated, please contact your Centre Administrator (usually the exams officer). If you are unsure whether your centre is registered or you cannot locate your Centre Administrator, please email the Customer Admin Support Team at cast@ocr.org.uk.
- **EDI (electronic data interchange) entries via A2C** – An electronic method of transmitting entry data to OCR without using a third party carrier (see Section 4.7). More information can be found on the A2C website.

4.6 Making entries using Interchange at Levels 1–3

Additional information for making entries via Interchange is provided on the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk/interchange. The step-by-step guide *Making online entries for Essential Skills Wales (ESW) via Interchange* is available on the OCR website.

To make entries using Interchange, log in to the system, hover over 'Entries' in the left-hand menu and click on 'Make entries'. Then click on the category entitled 'Vocationally related qualifications (including Entry Level, Text Processing, Young Enterprise)'. You then have a choice: you can either upload a spreadsheet or use a web-based entry form.

Named entries: uploading a spreadsheet

This method is ideal if you have large numbers of candidates. Please follow the instructions for named entries uploading a spreadsheet in Section 3.7.

Named entries: using a web-based form

This method is useful if your candidates already exist on Interchange or you only have a few candidates to enter.

For Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3, you can only submit named entries. Please follow the instructions for names entries using a web-based form in Section 3.7.

4.7 Making EDI entries via A2C

A2C is an electronic method of transmitting entry data to OCR using EDI files without using a third party carrier. More information can be found on the A2C website at http://a2c.jcq.org.uk.

It is only possible to make named entries via A2C. To make named entries using A2C, electronic entry files need to be created. To do this, you should load OCR's basedata to your system. Basedata is examination data which is used to process entries using A2C.

The basedata is available to download from the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk/i-want-to/find/basedata.

How you load the basedata will depend on your examination administration software. All electronic entry and amendment files must conform to a common file structure and format. These are defined in the JCQ *Formats for the Exchange of Examination Related Data.*

Unlike for general qualifications such as GCSEs and A Levels, please ensure that for Essential Skills Wales you use the awarding body identifier of **72** (OCR Coventry Office)**.**

A2C entry codes

To make entries, the qualification scheme code without the leading zero is followed by 00 indicating that it is a full award. For example, the A2C entry code for a full award for Level 1–3 Application of Number (04491) would be 449100.

A2C entry amendments

Once you have sent your first EDI entry file via A2C, any additional entry files must be sent as amendment files. It is possible to send EDI amendment files with:

- Entries for new candidates
- New entries for existing candidates.

However, unlike for general qualifications such as GCSEs and A Levels, you **must not** send changes to candidates' personal details or changes to candidates' existing entries via A2C. Please see Section 3.9 for details of how to update candidates' personal details.

Acknowledgements of A2C files

Once OCR has downloaded your entry or amendment file, this will be acknowledged within the 'Logs' screen of the A2C migration application under the 'Sent Files' tab. OCR downloads files at least three times each working day. An acknowledgement does not mean that the file has been successfully loaded to our system as, at this point, no validation checks have been performed.

EDI validation checks

Once OCR receives your entries, a number of checks are carried out. If your entries fail the validation checks, we will contact you. It is important for you to be available once files have been submitted, in case there are any queries on your entries.

Technical support for A2C entries

Each set of basedata includes a help file (.txt suffix) containing a description of the contents of the basedata and other helpful advice. Please consult this help file first if you have any queries.

Technical support for the examination software packages used by centres is not available from OCR; please contact your software supplier. However, if you have any queries relating to the receipt of entry files, please contact the Customer Contact Centre.

4.8 Viewing entries

When we have successfully processed your entries, they will be available to view within approximately 48 hours of receiving your entries (if there are no issues with the entries).

You can view all entry information within Interchange, for both entries made via Interchange and A2C. Please refer to Section 3.8 for details.

4.9 On receipt of your entries

You can view all entry information within Interchange (see Section 4.8). On receipt of your entries, we will also:

- Allocate an eight-digit OCR candidate number to each new Essential Skills Wales candidate (see Section 3.4)
- Send an invoice for the full amount payable to your accounts contact (for details of the entry fees, please see the OCR Fees List at www.ocr.org.uk/fees).

4.10 Amending or withdrawing entries

Please refer to Section 3.9 for details of how to update candidates' personal details. You must not make personal detail amendments via A2C.

5 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

5.1 Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are made prior to an assessment to enable a candidate with particular requirements to demonstrate attainment. They must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes; nor must they give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners taking the same or similar assessments.

Applications for alternative assessment arrangements and reasonable adjustments must only be made by the centre and cannot be made by parents or candidates.

Depending on the type and level of the assessment, centres will need to do one of the following:

- Apply to the OCR Special Requirements Team (OCR, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU).
- Make the arrangement without consulting OCR and keep a record on file.
- Make the arrangement without consulting OCR; evidence is not required on file.

Specific information and guidance for each qualification can be found in the JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.*

5.2 Special consideration

Special consideration is a post-assessment adjustment reflecting temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time the assessment was taken.

It is important to note that it will not be possible to apply special consideration where:

- The assessment is competence based
- The assessment criteria have not been fully met.

Due to the flexibility of Essential Skills Wales, if a candidate is disadvantaged whilst completing the work the centre should offer them an alternative assessment opportunity prior to certification.

Where a candidate has missed either all or some of the assessment, it must be fully completed at a later date prior to certification.

Further details can be found in the JCQ *A guide to the special consideration process.*

Lost or damaged candidate work

Candidates are responsible for taking care of their work. However, if work is lost through no fault of the candidate, centres can complete and return a Notification of Lost Centre-Assessed Work (JCQ/LCW Form 15), which is available from the JCQ website. Instructions on completing this are provided on the form. In all cases, the centre must be able to verify that the work was done and that it was monitored whilst it was in progress.

6 Moderation and Claims: Entry Level

This section applies to **Entry Level** Essential Skills Wales qualifications (see Section 7 for information on **Levels 1–3** qualifications).

These qualifications are on-demand, task-based qualifications, which can take place at any time at a centre's request. OCR-set tasks are assessed in the centre and the candidates' work is then sent by post to be moderated by an OCR examiner-moderator.

6.1 Assessment

Once you have made your entries, you can download the OCR-set tasks from OCR Interchange. To access the OCR-set tasks, once logged into Interchange, hover over 'Coursework and tests' and then click on 'Entry level tasks' (listed under 'Support material') in the left-hand menu. On the following page, click on the 'Essential Skills Wales' heading to see all OCR-set tasks for Application of Number, Communication and ICT.

If you cannot see this area, check with your Interchange Centre Administrator (usually the Exams Officer) that you have the correct role – you need either the Tutor/Teacher role.

Further information about the assessment for each qualification can be found in the centre handbooks, which are available from the relevant qualifications pages on the OCR website.

6.2 Evidence produced in the Welsh medium

If your candidates are producing their evidence in the medium of Welsh, please contact OCR (see section 1.2) so that we can allocate a bilingual assessor.

6.3 Certification claims

Once the assessment is complete, you need to make a claim in order to obtain the certification. There are two steps to the claim process:

- Step one – submit an online claim (see Section 6.4).
- Step two – submit candidate work by post to the OCR examiner-moderator (see Section 6.5).

Centre-assessed work for Entry Level Essential Skills Wales qualifications is submitted to the OCR examiner-moderator, by post, for moderation. This allows OCR to sample the work, in order to ensure that the required standards are being met.

There are no specific deadlines for making certification claims; however, it is important only to make claims when you are confident that the requirements for the unit have been met. Under no circumstances must claims be submitted unless, in the final opinion of the centre, the work meets the requirements for certification.

Centres must clarify any assessment queries with OCR before making claims for centre-assessed work. **The moderation process must not be used as a means of obtaining a second opinion on assessment decisions.**

You should also submit the claim **at least two weeks** before you expect the examiner-moderator to review your candidates' work. (Certificates will be issued 35 days after submitting your candidate work to the examiner-moderator.)

6.4 Making a claim

Certification claims for Essential Skills Wales qualifications are made online via Interchange. You will need either the Centre Administrator or Tutor/Teacher role to access this area. You can only create a claim if entries have previously been made for the qualification (see Section 3). For further help and support in making online claims, please see our step-by-step guides, which are available on the OCR website.

Starting a claim

To get started, log in to Interchange, hover over 'Certification claims' in the left-hand menu and then click on 'Make claim' under the **'QCF claims' heading**. You will then be able to see a list of *all* the vocational qualifications for which you have made entries and the status of any claims being made.

If you cannot see this area, check with your Interchange Centre Administrator that you have the correct role – you need either the 'Centre Administrator' or 'Tutor/Teacher' role.

You can only start a new claim for a particular qualification if all previous claims for that qualification have been submitted. To start a claim, choose the qualification you want to make a claim for from the list and click 'Create' next to a qualification title.

Setting up your assessment personnel

The first time you create a claim for each qualification, you will be prompted to set up your **centre assessors**. These are the people within **your centre** who will be marking the assessment, **not** the OCR assessor, and not your centre's Essential Skills Wales co-ordinator or Exams Officer. (Once your first centre assessor is set up, you won't be prompted in this way again.) You need to keep these details up-to-date.

Type the centre assessor's full name and initials in the boxes provided. Up to four initials will be accepted and these should be unique within your centre.

NB Any number of centre assessors can build a claim, but only one assessor should submit it.

It is essential that you provide the details of the person responsible for marking the assessment so that you and OCR can chose samples to moderate for each assessor.

Adding candidates

You will see a list of all eligible candidates once you click to create a claim. To add a candidate to the claim, click on 'Create new' next to each candidate's name.

You can add either individual candidates or whole candidate groups to a claim. Candidate groups can be tailored to include candidates of your choice. To create a bespoke candidate group, log in to Interchange, hover over 'Candidates' in the left hand menu and click on 'Candidate groups'.

Adding units

The claim will show you the single available unit in the qualification selected. Entry Level Essential Skills Wales qualifications are single-unit qualifications therefore it is only necessary to add one unit. It is not possible to add additional units to your claim. To add a unit, select the centre assessor from the dropdown list and click in the 'Claiming' column. If you have only entered one centre assessor, you will see that name pre-populated for every unit being claimed.

Editing the claim

You can build up claims over a period of time. As long as you do not submit the claim, you can keep adding to or editing an existing claim by clicking 'Edit' next to the qualification title or the candidate name.

Remember to save your additions before leaving each page. If you cancel or do not save a specific candidate claim, all the details you have entered will be removed – this includes candidate details if this is a new claim for a new candidate for an unnamed entry.

You may wish to **remove a candidate/qualification from the claim**. Click on the candidate's name to open the claim for that candidate. Click on the radio button in the 'Not claiming' column to remove the candidate/qualification from the claim and click on 'Save claim' (or 'Add to claim' if you have made unnamed entries).

Submitting the claim

When you have included all the relevant candidate achievements, you can submit a claim from the 'View claim' option on the claim.

It is good practice to enter the data for each qualification, save the claim (without submitting) and then print it so that it can be checked and amended before submitting. Before you submit the claim, you can also export it as a CSV file for your records.

Please also check that the email address shown for you is correct. You can edit it here but it will not be a permanent change to your Interchange profile. If your address has permanently changed, ask your Centre Administrator to update your profile.

For Entry Level qualifications only, you will also see a declaration and tick box on this page. This requires you to confirm that you have printed a copy of the claim to be included with the work submitted for moderation (see Section 6.5). If you do not tick this box, an error message will appear and you will not be allowed to submit the claim. Print the claim by clicking on the 'Print page' link on the right-hand side of the page before ticking the declaration box and clicking on 'Submit to assessor'.

It is important that you check your claim carefully before you submit, as you will not be able to amend any of the contents once it has been submitted. When you click on 'Submit to assessor', a warning message will appear, prompting you to confirm that you want to submit the claim. **Only click 'yes' if you are ready to submit the claim.**

Once submitted, you will see a message to confirm your claim has gone to the allocated OCR examiner-moderator. The OCR examiner-moderator will then receive an email to let them know that claims have been made.

Checking the progress of a claim

You can see the claim you are making at each stage of the process as well as after certification. To view all submitted claims, hover over 'Certification claims' in the left-hand menu and then click on 'View claim history'. You can check the whole claim or export the claim for your own records. The

claim will stay available on Interchange for 12 months. At each stage of the process, the claim will show a different status:

Status	Comments
Submitted	The claim has been submitted to your assessor. It can no longer be edited.
Finalised	The claim has been revised/finalised by the OCR assessor. This will only appear for a short time. However, if all units within a claim have been withdrawn, the claim will remain in this stage.
Processed	The claim has been sent to OCR and results should appear on Interchange in approximately 48 hours.
Withdrawn	The OCR assessor has withdrawn the whole claim. If the assessor withdraws the claim, and the candidate wishes to achieve the qualification, when the candidate is ready, you simply need to make a new claim; there is no need to make a new entry.

6.5 Submitting candidate work following an online claim

Within 24 hours of submitting your claim online, you need to send all of the candidate work (for all of the candidates for whom you have made a claim) to your examiner-moderator. To find the most up-to-date details for your examiner-moderator, once logged in to Interchange, hover over 'Centre information' and then click on 'View examiner-moderators' in the left-hand menu. Then just enter the qualification information into the relevant boxes and a list of the examiner-moderators for your qualifications will be produced. Click on the 'magnifying glass' for each qualification to view the full examiner-moderator address details. Please remember to check these details each time you wish to send candidate work following a claim.

When sending your candidate work, you need to send a printout of the claim (see 'Submitting the claim' in Section 6.4).

Please make sure that work for each claim is packaged separately; do not submit work for more than one claim in the same package.

We recommend that centres use a secure form of delivery to send the candidates' work to their allocated examiner-moderator. We cannot take responsibility for any work lost in transit.

We are unable to return candidate work to centres, so you may wish to take a copy before submitting evidence.

6.6 Processing an online claim

Your OCR examiner-moderator will moderate the work and confirm or edit the claim as appropriate. They will then send it to OCR to process. You will get an email to say the claim has been sent to OCR and you can view the actual claims sent from the 'View claim history' menu item (look for Finalised/Processed statuses in the status column).

6.7 Feedback reports (e-NQF6)

Once moderation is complete, the OCR examiner-moderator will produce a centre feedback report for each batch of work submitted. This form is a multi-purpose document which is used to:

- Record the examiner-moderator's adjustments to the centre's assessment or administration

- Provide feedback to the centre on possible issues with the centre's assessment or administration.

To view the report, log in to Interchange, hover over 'Centre information' and then click on 'Examiner-moderator reports'.

If the examiner-moderator finds that the standard of centre assessment is not consistent enough to ensure that sample moderation will be successful, the claim will be withdrawn and you will not receive an electronic feedback report for this claim. A hard copy report will be produced and sent to you by post.

6.8 Reporting Suspected Malpractice

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre (see Section 11.1) to report in writing all cases of suspected malpractice involving centre staff or candidates, A JCQ Report of Suspected Malpractice form (JCQ/M1), available to download from the JCQ website, should be completed 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.

Further information is contained in the publication OCR *Malpractice Procedures – A Guide for Centres* (available from www.ocr.org.uk/about-us/our-policies/regulations) and the JCQ *General and Vocational Qualifications – Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments* (available from www.jcq.org.uk).

7 Moderation and Claims: Levels 1–3

This section applies to **Levels 1–3 Essential Skills Wales qualifications**. (For Entry Level qualifications, see Section 6.)

Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3 are **centre assessed**. This means that candidates' work is assessed and standardised by centre staff and then externally moderated by an OCR visiting moderator. Assessment and moderation can take place at any time. External moderation ensures that a centre's internal assessment of candidate work is reliable, fair and consistent with required standards (as specified in the *Essential Skills Wales* standards documents, which can be downloaded from the Welsh Government website).

7.1 Scheduling the moderator visits

Once you have made your qualification entries (see Section 4), we will allocate a visiting moderator to your centre. The OCR visiting moderator will contact you to provisionally agree a mutually convenient date for their visit. Approved centres are entitled to one free visit per academic year. If required, centres may request additional moderation visits – any additional visits will be charged at the standard visit fee, as described in the OCR Fees List at www.ocr.org.uk/fees.

If candidates require their Essential Skills Wales results in time for submission of the results for the Welsh Baccalaureate, it is recommended that centres with **accredited centre status** (ACS) (see Section 7.7) plan and request the moderation visit before the end of May. For centres without accredited centre status (also known as non-ACS centres) the moderation visit should be planned and requested no later than mid-May.

Please note that your moderation visit cannot take place between 17 and 30 August 2015.

7.2 Centre assessment

Evidence

When compiling the Essential Skills Wales portfolio, candidates must generate evidence which must be assessed against the Essential Skills Wales standards and evidence requirements. The evidence can be:

- Embedded in academic or vocational work
- Generated from activities outside the candidate's main curriculum.

All portfolio evidence must:

- Be fully completed
- Be assessed by the centre and meet the evidence requirements and be in line with the current regulatory authorities' guidance
- Be included in the centre's internal standardisation process to ensure the assessment decisions are consistently accurate
- Be authenticated by completing and signing the OCR recording documents, or equivalent.

Evidence used from other qualifications

Where a candidate's work has been initially assessed against other specific NVQ, AVCE, GCSE, AS or A Level specifications, it must be assessed separately for Essential Skills Wales and appropriate feedback should be provided to the candidate. Assessors must provide a clear record of this assessment and feedback using standard assessment recording documents.

Recording documents

OCR has produced recording documents for each Essential Skills Wales qualification to support assessors and candidates in recording assessment and tracking evidence. These can be downloaded from the relevant qualifications pages on the OCR website. We strongly recommend the use of these documents. You may use your own versions, so long as your forms supply the same information contained in the OCR documents as a minimum.

7.3 Evidence produced in the Welsh medium

If your candidates are producing their evidence in the medium of Welsh, please contact the OCR Allocations Team in Coventry so that we can allocate a bilingual assessor.

7.4 Internal moderation

Internal moderation is the process that checks assessment decisions are consistently accurate within a centre. This must be completed before portfolio achievements can be claimed. Internal moderators must have a full understanding of the national standards and OCR's systems and documentation, although they do not have to hold an internal moderator qualification.

Where internal moderators also act as assessors, the centre must have at least two internal moderators and they must not moderate any evidence that they have assessed.

Assessors

Assessors are required to have appropriate specialist expertise and knowledge in the Essential Skills Wales qualifications they are assessing to enable them to make accurate assessment decisions in line with the national standards. They do not need to hold an assessor qualification.

Choosing an assessment sample

It is not normally necessary to check every single assessment decision, so the internal moderator should select a sample. Sampling should take place well before the moderation visit so that assessors and candidates have sufficient time to resolve any problems.

The minimum requirement when choosing the sample is to include:

- All assessors in the internal moderator's team (each assessor must be sampled by the internal moderator at least once in a 12-month period)
- For each assessor in the team, all Essential Skills Wales qualifications at all levels
- Welsh medium and dual language (English and Welsh) portfolios, where applicable.

When choosing the sample, you should consider other factors that influence assessment, for example:

- The experience of the assessor
- The number of portfolios assessed by each assessor
- The language used to present the portfolio evidence, i.e. English, Welsh medium, dual language (English and Welsh). If a centre assessor is assessing in both languages, assessment decisions for both languages must be sampled.
- The number of different candidate cohorts allocated to each assessor
- The number of different assignment briefs/tasks used by the assessor
- Your centre's experience in delivering the different Essential Skills Wales qualifications
- Any problems that may have already been identified, e.g. in interpreting the Essential Skills Wales standards.

External moderator's sample

When your OCR moderator makes the selection for external moderation, please ensure that **some** of the portfolios have been internally moderated.

The OCR moderator will need to select a sample from Interchange incorporating every assessor in your centre who has the lead responsibility for Essential Skills Wales portfolios. It is essential that you include the initials of the person responsible for assessing the portfolio, so that you and OCR can chose samples to moderate for each assessor. Where there is more than one centre assessor involved with the assessing of a portfolio, the centre must identify a lead assessor for the purposes of moderating.

Recording assessment decisions

The feedback to the assessor and any actions must be recorded. We have created an Essential Skills Wales internal moderation sampling record and an Essential Skills Wales internal moderator's report on assessment decisions to help internal moderators record their internal moderation sample and monitor assessment practice. These can be downloaded from the Forms section of the relevant Essential Skills Wales qualifications page of the OCR website. Since centres must use standard tracking and assessment recording documents for accredited centre status, we recommend that these documents are used.

Where action for the assessor is identified, the internal moderator is responsible for checking that the actions have been completed before the moderation visit. Confirmation that the actions have been completed must be recorded and dated.

All centres should keep records of assessment decisions and outcomes of internal moderation for at least two years after certification has been claimed.

Centres should also keep a representative sample of candidates' work to ensure that assessment decisions remain consistent over time (this can be a photocopy).

7.5 Certification claims

When you are ready to submit candidates' work for external moderation by OCR, you can make a claim for each candidate; this must be done via Interchange. Additional information on making online claims, including a step-by-step guide, is provided on the OCR website.

There are no specific deadlines for making certification claims; however, it is important only to make claims when you are confident that the requirements for the unit have been met. Under no

circumstances must claims be submitted unless, in the final opinion of the centre, the work meets the requirements for certification.

To allow visiting moderators time to select a sample of candidates' work for moderation, centres must ensure that the claim is made **at least two weeks** before the scheduled moderation visit.

You must only submit a claim when you are ready for the claim to be moderated and processed. If you are not ready to make claims, contact your visiting moderator to discuss the possibility of organising a visit for advice and guidance ahead of formal moderation (see Section 7.1). The fee for the advisory visit can be found in the OCR Fees List, which is available on the OCR website.

Centres must clarify any assessment queries with OCR before making claims for centre-assessed work. **The moderation process must not be used as a means of obtaining a second opinion on assessment decisions.**

7.6 Making a claim

To make a claim for Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3, the process is the same as for the Entry Level qualifications; you need to make a claim via Interchange. Please follow the instructions in Section 6.4.

Note: When making an online claim for Levels 1–3 qualifications, once you click to create a claim, you will see a list of all eligible candidates. When you click on 'Create new' next to each candidate's name, you will see the qualification the candidate is entered for, at Levels 1–3. **Only select the skill area and level being claimed and the candidate's assessor (NB if the assessor's details do not appear you will need to add their details.)**

Selecting a sample

The process for selecting a sample depends on whether the centre has accredited centre status (ACS) (please see Section 7.7).

- **Non-ACS centres** – The OCR moderator will select a sample after you have submitted the claim. Centres will be notified of the selected sample via email and further details of the sample can be found on Interchange.
- **ACS centres** – Every three months, the OCR moderator will contact the ACS officer to let them know which portfolios must be retained. Once the OCR moderator has confirmed which portfolios are to be retained, the centre can return the remaining portfolios to candidates. For the three-month period immediately prior to the visit, the centre must retain all portfolios for which claims have been made during this three-month period.

Note: OCR can request access to any portfolio (even those not selected for sampling) until the OCR Visiting Standards Moderator has visited and confirmed the assessment decisions are accurate. Records must be kept be centres for a minimum of three years. This is the same for both non-ACS and ACS centres.

7.7 Accredited centre status (ACS)

Accredited centre status (ACS) enables centres which have demonstrated consistently accurate assessment standards to claim Essential Skills Wales portfolio achievements directly.

Achieving accredited centre status

To be eligible for ACS, your centre's two most recent moderation visits must have been successful (i.e. no portfolios should have been withdrawn by the centre or rejected by the OCR moderator). At the second visit, the OCR moderator confirms that your centre is eligible for ACS and records this on the centre report. OCR will then send you two copies of the ACS offer letter which outlines OCR's conditions of ACS.

You should nominate an **ACS officer**, who will be responsible for managing the internal moderation of OCR's Essential Skills Wales qualifications effectively. The ACS officer will therefore normally hold a senior position, e.g. Senior Manager, Essential Skills Wales Co-ordinator or Head of Centre. Whilst the ACS officer is responsible for managing the internal moderation process, this does not mean that they are expected to authorise each individual portfolio achievement claim.

If your centre choses the ACS option, the ACS officer should sign and return one copy of the offer letter to OCR. We will then email the ACS officer to confirm your centre's ACS status.

7.8 Preparing for the moderation visit (non-ACS centres)

You must ensure that the following are available for the OCR moderator:

- **A quiet base room** – this should include facilities for:
    - Accessing Interchange
    - Moderating electronic portfolios (if applicable)
    - Replaying audio and/or video recordings (if applicable).
- **The moderation sample** – selected by the OCR external moderator via Interchange. Please ensure that **some** of the portfolios have been internally moderated.
- **All centre assessment and internal moderation records** – these should be separately available. Copies of assignments/activities/tasks set by the centre should be available.
- **Evidence that shows how Essential Skills Wales information is disseminated** – up-to-date information provided by OCR and the regulatory authorities should be distributed to all centre staff involved in the assessment and internal moderation.

7.9 The moderation visit (non-ACS centres)

The OCR moderator will not need to see any candidates during the visit and centre staff do not need to be present until the OCR moderator is ready to discuss the outcomes (see below).

The OCR moderator will assess the portfolio evidence in the sample and judge whether the evidence meets the agreed Essential Skills Wales standards.

If it is deemed to be unacceptable, this could be for one or more of the following reasons:

- Work does not meet the required standard in line with the current Welsh government guidance
- Important aspects of the evidence requirements are being misinterpreted
- Assessment in the sample is inconsistent

- Some evidence is missing or has not been cross-referenced to the evidence requirements, so cannot be found by the OCR moderator.

If portfolio evidence has been withdrawn, candidates may be resubmitted for moderation when the OCR moderator's actions have been carried out. This moderation will take place at a separate visit.

7.10 Outcomes of the visit (non-ACS centres)

At the end of each moderation visit, the OCR moderator will discuss the outcomes of their moderation with centre staff and agree any action required by the centre. The outcome will apply to all candidates entered for moderation on that occasion for that Essential Skills Wales qualification by the centre – not just the candidates sampled. A centre report will be completed within 48 hours of the visit and emailed to the centre representative by the OCR visiting moderator. This report is designed to be supportive and will include comments on the accuracy of the centre's assessment, advice to the centre and action to be taken by the centre.

Successful outcomes

Where the outcome of the moderation for each Essential Skills Wales qualification is successful, the OCR moderator will review and confirm the claim(s) on Interchange.

If this visit is the second consecutive successful visit, the OCR moderator will also confirm the centre's eligibility for accredited centre status (see Section 7.7) on the front of the centre report. This does not mean that ACS has been granted at this stage.

Unsuccessful outcomes

Where the outcome of the moderation process for any Essential Skill Wales skill area is not successful or where the centre has withdrawn portfolios, the OCR moderator will provide action points and review and withdraw the claim(s) on Interchange. This will ensure that any affected Essential Skills Wales skill is not claimed. The certification record summary sheet and certification record forms will be left in the centre until the next moderation visit.

If a centre wishes to make an enquiry about results following a moderation visit (see Section 9.2), it must retain all those portfolios sampled at the moderation visit.

7.11 The moderation visit (ACS centres)

Once centres have been awarded accredited centre status, they must have a visit **within six months**. If this visit is successful, the ACS will be confirmed until the date of the next visit. This visit must then take place within 12 months or ACS approval will lapse.

Centres with ACS must ensure that the following are available:

- **A quiet base room** – This should include facilities for:
    - Accessing Interchange
    - Moderating electronic portfolios (if applicable)
    - Replaying audio and/or video recordings (if applicable).
- **A sample of candidates' portfolios** for which portfolio claims have been made since the last visit. Every three months, the OCR moderator will contact the ACS officer to let them

know which portfolios must be retained. Once the OCR moderator has confirmed which portfolios are to be retained, the centre can return the remaining portfolios to candidates. For the three-month period immediately prior to the visit, the centre must retain all portfolios for which claims have been made in this three-month period. During the ACS visit, the OCR moderator will reassess the sample and judge whether the evidence meets the Essential Skills Wales standards. Following the ACS visit, the centre can return all portfolios to candidates. Please ensure that **some** of the portfolios in this sample have been internally moderated.

- **All centre assessment and internal moderation records** – These should be separately available. Copies of assignments/activities/tasks set by the centre should be available.
- **Evidence that shows how Essential Skills Wales information is disseminated** – up-to-date information provided by OCR and the regulatory authorities should be distributed to all centre staff involved in the assessment and internal moderation.

Outcomes of the visit and feedback

At the end of each moderation visit, the OCR moderator will discuss the outcomes of their moderation with centre staff and agree any action required by the centre. On the basis of the visit, the OCR moderator will confirm whether the centre can continue to hold accredited centre status.

A centre report will be completed within 48 hours of the visit and emailed to the centre representative by the OCR visiting moderator. This report will give feedback on both the assessment decisions and the internal moderation process and activities within the centre. It is designed to be supportive and may include action to be taken by the centre. The action points must be completed by the date of the next visit. The centre report will be signed by the OCR moderator and the centre's ACS officer.

Suspending ACS

The OCR moderator will suspend ACS, and may withdraw certificates, for one or more of the following reasons:

- Work does not meet the required standard for one or more Essential Skills Wales skill area in line with the current Welsh government guidance
- Important aspects of the evidence requirements are being misinterpreted
- Assessment in the sample is inconsistent
- Some evidence is missing or has not been cross-referenced to the evidence requirements and cannot be found by the OCR moderator.
- Action points identified at the previous visit have not been addressed.
- The portfolios requested for sampling are not available (unless, in the opinion of the moderator, there are exceptional circumstances)

Please note that, if ACS is suspended, it will be suspended for all Essential Skills Wales qualifications and centres will not be permitted to make portfolio achievement claims directly.

Reinstating ACS

Once the centre is confident that all the action points within the centre report have been addressed, they should arrange a free ACS 'reinstatement visit'. At this visit, the OCR moderator will check that action points have been addressed. If this is successful, the OCR moderator will confirm that ACS is reinstated. If the OCR moderator does not confirm reinstatement, they will

provide further action points for the centre. The reinstatement visit is free of charge; however, if the OCR moderator does not confirm reinstatement, the centre will be charged for subsequent visit(s).

7.12 Reporting suspected malpractice

Please refer to Section 6.8 for details.

8 Results and Certification

This section applies to all the qualifications within this guide.

8.1 Results

Once moderation has taken place and the OCR visiting moderator/examiner-moderator has confirmed your candidates' claims, we will issue electronic results and a hard copy awarding report.

Results for all levels (Entry and Levels 1–3) will appear on **Interchange** as and when results are processed. Interchange will always show the most up-to-date results information.

Results are **not** issued via A2C for Essential Skills Wales qualifications at any level.

8.2 Certificates

When will certificates be issued?

We aim to issue full award certificates for successful candidates within six working days of receipt of a confirmed claim. These must be checked carefully as soon as they are issued since a fee is charged for replacement certificates more than six months after the date of issue.

What appears on the certificate?

Certificates are issued in the candidate's name at the time the award is made. Centres are advised to enter candidates in their legal name which can be supported by appropriate documentation, e.g. birth certificate. Replacements will not be provided to accommodate a subsequent change of name (including a change by deed poll).

A Qualification Reference Number is printed where the specification has been accredited by the regulators of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Certificate conditions of issue

A certificate is and remains the property of OCR and is issued on the following conditions:

- A certificate must be returned upon OCR's request. OCR reserves the right to replace certificates if necessary.
- It is the responsibility of the centre to forward certificates to its candidates. Certificates may be handed to the candidates, and centres should obtain proof of identity and signatures confirming receipt. Alternatively, certificates may be posted to candidates by a traceable method, e.g. **Recorded Signed For™**, at the centre's discretion and responsibility.
- Any alteration or defacement of a certificate renders it invalid and may result in its withdrawal.
- Centres must retain all unclaimed certificates under secure conditions for a minimum of 12 months from the date of issue.

- Centres can destroy any unclaimed certificates after retaining them for a minimum of 12 months. They must be destroyed confidentially. Centres that are unable to do this may return them to the Results Team, OCR, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU. A record of certificates that have been destroyed should be retained in the centre for four years from their date of destruction.

8.3 Replacement certificates

For vocational qualifications, OCR can provide a replacement certificate in the cases described below.

Lost certificates

Centres should formally make the request in writing using the request form on the OCR website. Candidates should use the application form which can be downloaded from the 'Learners and parents' area of the OCR website. If the request is made by a centre within six months of the certificate issue date, replacements will be provided free of charge. A fee is charged for replacement certificates more than six months after the date of issue. Please see the OCR Fees List. Applications should be sent to the Historical Records team, OCR, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU.

Damaged certificates

Centres or candidates may apply for replacements for damaged certificates. The request must be made in writing to the Historical Records team, OCR, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, and accompanied by the original certificate(s). If the request is made within six months of the certificate issue date, replacements will be provided free of charge. A fee is charged for replacement certificates more than six months after the date of issue. Please see the OCR Fees List.

Requests for name corrections

Although it is not possible to change names on certificates (see Section 8.2), requests to correct spelling mistakes can be made by the centre or the candidate in writing. The request must be made in writing to the Historical Records team, OCR, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, and accompanied by the original certificate(s), highlighting the change required. If the request is made within six months of the certificate issue date, replacements will be provided free of charge. A fee is charged for replacement certificates more than six months after the date of issue. Please see the OCR Fees List.

9 Post-Results Services

This section applies to all the qualifications within this guide.

9.1 Missing or incomplete results

If a candidate's work was submitted, but no certificate is received or the certificate accredits different units from those expected, you should check the centre feedback report (either hard copy or via Interchange). If there is no reference to the amendment of awards, you should check the centre copy of the candidate submission sheet (if applicable) or Interchange to see if the correct units have been indicated for the candidate(s) concerned. If the incorrect units are shown, please contact the OCR Customer Contact Centre (see Section 1.7).

9.2 Enquiries about results

Available services

- **Clerical re-check** – this is a re-check of all clerical procedures leading to the issue of a result. This service will include the following checks:
    - That all parts of the script have been marked, where applicable
    - The totalling of marks, where applicable
    - The recording of marks, where applicable
    - The application of any adjustments
    - The application of any grade thresholds, where applicable
    - The application of any special consideration, where applicable – please indicate on your application if special consideration was requested at the time of the examination.
- **Post-results review without report (for an individual candidate)** – this is a review of the original marking to ensure that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly. The service is available for both on-demand and timetabled specifications. This service will include:
    - The clerical re-checks detailed above
    - A review of marking as described above.
- **Post-results review with report (for an individual candidate)** – This is a review of the original marking to ensure that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly. This can be done for between one and four candidates. The service is available for both on-demand and timetabled specifications. This service will include:
    - The clerical re-checks detailed above
    - A review of marking as described above
    - A report by the Chief Examiner – this will be an individual report detailing the candidate's performance.
- **Post-results review with report (for a group of candidates)** – This is a review of the original marking to ensure that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly, for a

group of candidates (a minimum of five candidates and no more than 15 candidates per examination). This service will include:

- The clerical re-checks detailed above
- A review of marking as described above
- A report by the Chief Examiner – This will be a group report, which will not refer to specific candidates but will report on the group as a whole.

- **Post-results review of moderation** – The original moderation is reviewed to ensure that the required assessment criteria have been fairly, reliably and consistently applied. This service should only be used when the centre disagrees with the moderator's comments. In all other cases, improvements should be agreed between the centre and the moderator and the work should be resubmitted at the next visit.

  It is not possible for a centre to make this type of enquiry for individual candidates as a review of moderation will affect the results of all candidates that were put forward for external moderation at the same time, and whose claims were submitted in the same batch.

  The review of moderation will be carried out either by post or through a further visit, depending on the quantity of candidates' work involved in the enquiry. If a further visit is required, the centre will be contacted by the moderator to arrange a convenient date for a review of moderation to be carried out.

Submitting enquiries about results

All enquiries about results must be submitted within three months of the receipt of results.

Before submitting a request, it is good practice for centres to obtain consent for clerical checks and post-results reviews of marking since, with these services, candidates' marks and subject grades may be lowered.

Enquiries about results should be submitted using the application form that can be downloaded from the OCR website and emailed to vq_result_enquries@ocr.org.uk.

Application forms must be emailed by the Head of Centre, an authorised member of staff or a private candidate (with proof of ID). OCR will not accept applications submitted by any other individuals, e.g. candidates entered through a centre or parents. An emailed application form will be accepted by OCR as confirmation that the centre agrees to pay any fees applicable should the enquiry be unsuccessful.

Acknowledgements and outcomes

All applications will be acknowledged within seven working days.

The outcome of each enquiry will be confirmed via email. You should expect to receive an outcome as follows:

- **Clerical re-check** – Within 20 days of OCR receiving the request.
- **Post-results review** – Within four to six weeks of OCR receiving the request.
- **Post-results review with report** – Within four to six weeks of OCR receiving the request.
- **Post-results review of moderation** – Within 40 calendar days of OCR receiving the application form.

Where a grade changes and a certificate has already been issued, a replacement will be issued showing the revised grade once the centre returns the original to OCR.

Fees

There is no charge for a clerical re-check.

The fees associated with the post-results review services are provided in the OCR Fees List. Centres will only be charged if a subject grade does not change. Where the subject grade changes as a consequence of the enquiry, no fee will be charged.

Centres can either request to be invoiced following the outcome of the enquiry or send a cheque with the application form. If the enquiry is successful, the centre will not be invoiced for the fee. If a cheque was sent with the enquiry, this will be returned if the enquiry is successful.

Appeals

If you still have concerns following the outcome of an enquiry about results, you may appeal against it. This must be done in writing, within 14 calendar days of receipt of the outcome, and addressed to the Appeals Team at appeals@ocr.org.uk. More information about appeals can be found in the OCR *Appeals Processes in Vocational Qualifications – A Guide for Centres*.

10 Entry Codes

10.1 Application of Number

Entry code	Qualification title	Qualification number
Entry Level		
Last date to make entries is 31 August 2015.		
04091	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number (Entry 1)	600/1126/9
04092	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number (Entry 2)	600/1127/0
04093	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number (Entry 3)	600/1128/2
Level 1		
04491	OCR Level 1 Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	500/7967/0
Level 2		
04491	OCR Level 2 Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	500/7968/2
Level 3		
04491	OCR Level 3 Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	500/7969/4
04490	**Access to all three Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3 at a reduced fee**	**n/a**
OCR offers centres in Wales a reduced fee for Levels 1–3 Essential Skills Wales qualifications. To access this reduced fee, learners must have been entered for Essential Skills Wales through entry code 04490.		
04499	**Access to Wider Key Skills at a reduced fee**	**n/a**
OCR also offers centres in Wales a reduced fee for the Wider Key Skills (Problem Solving, Working with Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance). To access Wider Key Skills at a reduced fee (04499), learners must have been entered for Essential Skills Wales through entry code 04490.		

10.2 Communication

Entry code	Qualification title	Qualification number
Entry Level		
Last date to make entries is 31 August 2015.		
04094	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Communication (Entry 1)	600/1129/4
04095	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Communication (Entry 2)	600/1130/0
04096	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Communication (Entry 3)	600/1131/2
Level 1		
04492	OCR Level 1 Essential Skills Wales in Communication	500/7962/1
Level 2		
04492	OCR Level 2 Essential Skills Wales in Communication	500/7963/3
Level 3		
04492	OCR Level 3 Essential Skills Wales in Communication	500/7970/0
04490	**Access to all three Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3 at a reduced fee**	**n/a**
OCR offers centres in Wales a reduced fee for Levels 1–3 Essential Skills Wales qualifications. To access this reduced fee, learners must have been entered for Essential Skills Wales through entry code 04490.		
04499	**Access to Wider Key Skills at a reduced fee**	**n/a**
OCR also offers centres in Wales a reduced fee for the Wider Key Skills (Problem Solving, Working with Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance). To access Wider Key Skills at a reduced fee (04499), learners must have been entered for Essential Skills Wales through entry code 04490.		

10.3 Information and Communication Technology

Entry code	Qualification title	Qualification number
Entry Level		
Last date to make entries is 31 August 2015.		
04448	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Information and Communication Technology (Entry 1)	600/1132/4
04449	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Information and Communication Technology (Entry 2)	600/1153/1
04450	OCR Entry Level Essential Skills Wales in Information and Communication Technology (Entry 3)	600/1133/6
Level 1		
04493	OCR Level 1 Essential Skills Wales in Information and Communication Technology	500/7964/5
Level 2		
04493	OCR Level 2 Essential Skills Wales in Information and Communication Technology	500/7965/7
Level 3		
04493	OCR Level 3 Essential Skills Wales in Information and Communication Technology	500/7966/9
04490	**Access to all three Essential Skills Wales qualifications at Levels 1–3 at a reduced fee**	**n/a**
OCR offers centres in Wales a reduced fee for Levels 1–3 Essential Skills Wales qualifications. To access this reduced fee, learners must have been entered for Essential Skills Wales through entry code 04490.		
04499	**Access to Wider Key Skills at a reduced fee**	**n/a**
OCR also offers centres in Wales a reduced fee for the Wider Key Skills (Problem Solving, Working with Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance). To access Wider Key Skills at a reduced fee (04499), learners must have been entered for Essential Skills Wales through entry code 04490.		

10.4 Wider Key Skills

Entry code	Qualification title	Qualification number
Last date to make entries is 31 August 2015.		
Level 1		
03905	OCR Level 1 Improving own Learning and Performance	100/3996/X
03906	OCR Level 1 Problem Solving	100/4000/6
03904	OCR Level 1 Working with Others	100/4004/3
Level 2		
03905	OCR Level 2 Improving Own Learning and Performance	100/3997/1
03906	OCR Level 2 Problem Solving	100/4001/8
03904	OCR Level 2 Working with Others	100/4005/5
Level 3		
03905	OCR Level 3 Improving own Learning and Performance	100/3998/3
03906	OCR Level 3 Problem Solving	100/4002/X
03904	OCR Level 3 Working with Others	100/4006/7
Level 4		
03905	OCR Level 4 Improving own Learning and Performance	100/3999/5
03906	OCR Level 4 Problem Solving	100/4003/1
03904	OCR Level 4 Working with Others	100/4007/9

11 Reference

11.1 Glossary

A2C	The JCQ A2C migration application has replaced the old EDI system, allowing centres to transmit entry data to OCR without using a third party carrier.
ACS (accredited centre status)	Accredited centre status (ACS) enables centres which have demonstrated consistently accurate assessment standards to claim Essential Skills Wales portfolio achievements directly.
Basedata	Basedata is examination data which is used to process entries via A2C. Designed to be electronically imported into a centre's administration software.
Centre approval	To offer OCR qualifications, you must first gain approval from OCR. Approval needs to be obtained for each suite of qualifications and you will only be able to enter candidates for the qualifications that you are approved to offer.
Centre handbook	Provides essential information for tutors/teachers (for example, qualification specifications and assessment requirements). Copies can be downloaded from the relevant qualifications pages on the OCR website.
Datasheet	Summarises useful technical information relating to the qualification; for example, its structure, unit titles and assessment requirements. Datasheets are written primarily for tutors/teachers but some administrative staff may find these useful.
EDI (electronic data interchange) file	The file format used when allowing centres to transmit entry data to OCR via A2C.
Enquiry about results	A post-results service available from OCR.
Examiner-moderator	An OCR examiner-moderator will review the centre assessment of candidates' work in accordance with the agreed assessment criteria.
Exams officer	The person appointed by the Head of Centre to act on behalf of the centre to administer examinations. OCR corresponds formally with the exams officer.
Head of Centre	This is the most senior officer in the organisation, e.g. the Headteacher or Principal of a school/college. The Head of Centre accepts full responsibility for the correct administration and conduct of OCR examinations.
Interchange	OCR's secure extranet, which allows centres to make entries, view results and apply for post-results services.
JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications)	A forum of examining boards in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which seeks to create common standards, regulations and guidance.
Named entry route	Where you provide specific candidate information (e.g. name and date of birth) for each qualification. All entries for Essential Skills Wales can be made via this route.
UCI	A 13-character code which must accompany a candidate's entry if you wish to make entries via A2C. It is allocated to a candidate by the centre.
Unnamed entry route	Where you order a number of units or qualifications in bulk, without specifying who will be taking them. Unnamed entries can only be submitted for Entry Level qualifications.

Visiting moderator	An OCR visiting moderator visits centres to carry out the moderation of certain forms of work which are centre assessed. The visiting moderator will review the centre assessment of candidates' work in accordance with the agreed assessment criteria.

11.2 Documents referred to in the text

The following documents are referred to within this *Admin Guide*. Additional copies can be downloaded from the relevant website.

DfE/Welsh government *Essential Skills Wales amplification and guidance*

DfE/Welsh government Essential Skills Wales standards documents for Communication, Application of Number and ICT

JCQ *A guide to the special consideration process*

JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*

OCR *Malpractice Procedures – A Guide for Centres*

JCQ *General and Vocational Qualifications – Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*

JCQ *Formats for the Exchange of Examination Related Data*

OCR *Appeals Processes in Vocational Qualifications – A Guide for Centres*

OCR *Fees List*

11.3 Useful websites

A2C Migration Application download website – http://a2c.avcosystems.com

Answers@OCR (our online bank of FAQs) – http://answers.ocr.org.uk

DfE (Department for Education and Skills) – http://new.wales.gov.uk

EOA (Examination Officers' Association) – www.examofficers.org.uk

JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) – www.jcq.org.uk

LRS (Learning Records Service) – http://help.learningrecordsservice.org.uk

National Apprenticeship Service – www.apprenticeships.org.uk

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations) – www.ocr.org.uk

OCR Interchange – https://interchange.ocr.org.uk

Ofqual (Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) – www.ofqual.gov.uk

Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications – http://register.ofqual.gov.uk

SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

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Facsimile 024 76 851633

vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

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