OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Cambridge Technicals

IT

Level 2 Cambridge Technical Certificate/Extended Certificate/Diploma IT - **05340, 05342, 05345**

Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate/Introductory Diploma/Diploma/ Subsidiary Diploma/Extended Diploma IT - **05347, 05349, 05352, 05355, 05358**

OCR Report to Centres 2013-2014

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

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

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

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1 The qualifications and standards

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Centre Assessment:

This is the second year of the Cambridge Technicals in IT and overall centres now feel more confident with the delivery and assessment of the units. A large number of centres have taken the opportunity to use the OCR Community, attend CPD events or access the Subject Expert Visits and this has aided their understanding of the unit specifications.

It is a concern that some centres did not access the moderator visits last year and waited until they had delivered the entire qualification before requesting a moderation visit. In many instances this resulted in learner work not meeting the standards. Centres are encouraged to access the two moderation visits per year. Whilst the moderator is not permitted to look at partially completed units, they can provide feedback on the completed units allowing learners to address any weaknesses or even improve their grades at a later date. Moderators can also provide guidance on the units that the centre is intending to offer.

Assessors are also reminded that they are required to complete a unit recording sheet for every unit for every individual learner and provide comments as to why they are accepting the evidence, ie feedback. The majority of assessors are using the forms correctly and providing some excellent feedback to their learners.

Assessors are now growing in confidence with the delivery of these qualifications and look for opportunities to be creative and innovative with respect to how the learners present their evidence as well as considering a more holistic approach. The moderators have stated that they have seen some excellent evidence put forward by learners.

Assessors are reminded that if video or audio is used to provide evidence, it is important that the sound quality is good and that the moderators are able to hear clearly what the learner in question is saying.

Where there have been weaknesses in assessment, this has been due to assessors not reading through the unit specification and taking on board the evidence requirements as stated in the section entitled 'SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT SCENARIOS AND TASK PLUS GUIDANCE ON ASSESSING THE SUGGESTED TASKS'. This particular section quantifies the evidence requirements against the assessment criteria.

Many of the assessors have used the Command Verb Definitions document with their learners and this has ensured that the responses/evidence provided by the learners are of sufficient depth.

Internal Moderation:

Centres are reminded to refer to Page 26 Section 4.3 of the Centre Handbook which clearly lays out the mandatory requirements for internal standardisation. Regardless of the size of the centre and/or number of assessors, internal standardisation must be carried out and documented accordingly. The OCR moderators will ask to see evidence of internal standardisation having taken place.

The purpose of internal standardisation is to:

- ensure all assessors are assessing to the required standard
- ensure all assessment decisions are fair, valid and reliable
- arrange regular standardisation meetings
- ensure cross-moderation of work between assessors
- ensure all units have been covered across the full range of grades
- ensure feedback has been provided to assessors and documented, eg minutes of meetings, records of feedback, etc
- maintain records of the outcome of cross-moderation activities
- advise centre assessors of any discrepancies in assessment
- suggest ways in which assessment may be brought into line to meet the required standard.

The vast majority of centres are conducting internal standardisation and this has resulted in successful moderation taking place.

Administration/Documentation:

It is important that centres ensure that any claims entered onto OCR Interchange are accurate. There have been a number of issues this year where learners have been missed off (and only noted after the moderation has taken place) and/or the incorrect grade uploaded. A moderator cannot withdraw individual learners and in some instances this has resulted in entire claims being withdrawn and having to be re-entered. In some instances, it has also had an effect on the sampling strategy of the moderator who may have only been informed on the day of the visit that there were errors in the claims.

Claims must also be uploaded at least four weeks prior to the moderation visit (refer to page 6 section 3.3 of the Administration Guide). There have been instances this year where moderators have spent a lot of time chasing centres to upload their claims.

Other issues have arisen from the process of topping up and/or dropping down. In some instances the person making the registrations/claims are not using the top or drop down codes but using the scheme code instead. This will result in a learner receiving unit certification only instead of the full qualification. The relevant codes can be found at http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/166033-fees-list-2014-15.pdf on page 28.

Centres are further reminded that for each learner submitting units for moderation, an authentication form should be completed and signed. It is not a requirement to provide a centre authentication form, just the individual ones for the learners.

Overall, the administration and documentation from centres has been very good and moderators have been able to access the evidence with very little trouble. It is important that the evidence is well referenced and made fully available for the moderator. A moderator does not have the time to look through evidence in the hope that they may find what they are looking for. If the presentation of the evidence is too difficult to navigate, a moderator could stop the visit and arrange to come back at a later date. It is also important that equipment is made available so that the moderators can access any of the electronic files presented eg to view the games, view videos, etc.

OCR Support and Resources:

OCR are continually looking at ways of providing resources and support for centres. A large number of centres have benefited from the OCR Community, CPD INSET events and Subject Expert Visits. There have been very few cancellations of the CPD INSET events and this was on the whole due to them being later in the year where centres had taken the opportunity to attend earlier events.

The OCR Community in particular has been very busy in the last year and it has been pleasing to see that the participants have embraced the ethos of the community with their questions, responses/ideas and even uploading some of their own resources. It is hoped that it will continue to grow and remain as 'lively' in the next academic year.

Centres are advised to regularly access the OCR website to review resources available as it is intended that new ones will be uploaded throughout the year. Currently there is a 'Learner Style Work' for one of the Learning Outcomes for Level 2 Units 1 and 2 and Level 3 Unit 1. A similar resource has been created for Level 3 Unit 2 which should be uploaded on the website soon. There will be further examples for other units uploaded throughout the year.

Centres are also reminded to access the Command Verbs Definition document as it can be used with learners to enable them to understand the depth of responses required.

Assessment Summary:

Overall, this has been a very positive year for the Cambridge Technicals in IT with learners achieving their desired grades and qualifications. On the whole the assessment practice of the centres has been very good and it is clear that assessors have taken note of the feedback provided by their moderators or advice from INSET events or the community.

Assessors are tending to look at the units more holistically and have fun with their learners by using innovative methods of gathering evidence as well as interesting activities. Many of the centres have confirmed that their learners have become more engaged with their studies and have had the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding of IT within a much wider context.

Congratulations to all of the centres and their learners who have achieved some excellent results this year. May this long continue.

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