

Vocational Qualifications (QCF, NVQ, NQF)

OCR Level 5 Diploma in Teaching Learners with Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties – **10218**

OCR Level 7 Diploma in Teaching and Assessing Learners with Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties – **10219**

OCR Report to Centres September 2016

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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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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

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1 Overview

The workplace for many candidates continues to value the currency of course requirements and the transferability of skills and knowledge to the work environment particularly with regard to assessment and teaching support.

Dissemination and cascading of knowledge is valued by colleagues especially regarding a range of SpLDs as classrooms now reflect a wide range of co-occurring difficulties and neurodiverse behaviours.

Schools in the state sector often advertise not just for a level 7 graduate but specifically OCR level 7.

The practical nature of the courses equips teachers to work with current systems and understand the educational sector across the age range. Practical work undertaken as course requirements in both teaching and assessment is supportive of schools and colleges and is highly appreciated during this economic climate in particular.

There are many examples of career progression on the basis of the qualifications and there are indications that graduates will have a direct impact on children and adults at a time when Local Authorities are under threat.

2 General Comments

Level 5

This course is valued for its practical emphasis on supporting learners with SpLDs.

Level 7

Level 7 offers further study for those wishing to become Assessors

Level 5 & Level 7

Assessment teams are generally strong and comprise of assessors who have completed the qualification themselves. There are excellent examples of induction and training for new assessors. Assessors maintain their own CPD and can often draw on the expertise of the multidisciplinary teams that they have access to for guest speakers.

Resources are continually being updated and centres increasingly rely on technology to allow candidates' access to Moodle, electronic libraries, etc. to allow greater access to materials, articles, research journals as well as contact via email with tutors and assessors.

Assessment and moderation show excellent practice.

Support and feedback is usually plentiful and helpful. Candidates interviewed frequently comment on how they appreciate the time that tutors and assessors have spent with them.

Formative and timely feedback allows progression in a steady fashion and allows for further support to be made available when needed.

3 Comments on Individual Units

Level 5 10218

Unit 1

1.1 Generic so that changes in legislation can be accommodated without comprising the learning outcomes. Weakness: quantity of exemplification not specified, so centres may vary significantly re number of policies covered. Centres are advised to prioritise and ensure that policy and practice is current.

1.2 Whilst 1.1 can be delivered and achieved early in the course it is often more sensible to delay 1.2 until candidates have built up their knowledge and experience through the teaching practice so that it can be linked to course candidates' teaching practice. Not all Centres do this as they assume Unit 1 comes first. Other Centres deliver this unit first, before any practical teaching. The instructions to Centres state that course candidates should not have access to any recommendations made by the author of the report. When the report being studied is that of an EP or Speech and Language Therapist, the recommendations should be included as these will be outside the usual remit of a specialist teacher. The learning outcome should be for the candidate to show how the recommendations could be reasonably implemented in their place of work. Other learning recommendations could also be suggested.

Unit 2

2.1 – The wording can be misleading as it suggests that candidates should be making a decision about whether further investigation is necessary, whereas in reality candidates are being asked to explain why this learner has been chosen for assessment.

Learning outcome 1

Candidates have to produce a checklist/questionnaire – for some candidates the focus of the assignment becomes an IT exercise. The rationale is a very useful exercise as it gives evidence of the candidate's knowledge and understanding.

Learning outcome 2, 3 and 4

The use of standardised tests is not mandatory – but many Centres feel that with this level of qualification a specialist teacher should be required to administer some standardised testing (e.g. reading and spelling tests and some form of cognitive testing such as digit span) accurately, and be able to understand standardised scores, knowledge that is required for Unit 1. Furthermore, this is often a requirement in candidates' workplaces.

Unit 3

Learning outcomes - clearly detailed. Assessment criteria 1.13, 1.1.5 contain the word 'justify' – might more usefully be interpreted as 'identify and use' – these are routinely included in the lesson plans, but 'justification' is not necessarily explicit.

This unit, if delivered comprehensively, should result in well informed and effective specialist teachers.

Unit 4

This Unit encourages candidates to reflect in depth on their own performance and each aspect of their practice. The work produced in this unit is excellent evidence of candidates' progression in knowledge, skills and understanding.

Level 7 10219

Unit 1

Learning outcomes, assessment criteria and exemplification allows for a broad SpLD topic base to be incorporated/considered for this unit.

The word count is reasonable and encourages the candidates to focus their comments and to be succinct.

The presentation encourages candidates to more fully research individual aspects of SpLD that relate to their learner and to record/present/discuss their improved knowledge and understanding.

Unit 2

This is a useful assignment that requires candidates to explicitly present/describe their understanding of the assessment process from start to finish.

Unit 3

There are queries about the credit value for this unit.

Some centres feel that one hour of observation is insufficient and so they observe all standardised tests to check for correct administration.

The Access Arrangements assessment works well and ensures that candidates understand the whole process.

There are comments that there is significantly more work for candidates who are carrying out assessments with KS3/4 and FE/HE than those who choose to do this assignment at KS2.

Units 4 and 5 – same comments as for Level 5

Unit 6

It is useful to have the link between units 1 and 6, whereby the research that will be carried out to teach their unit 6 learners can be used as a basis for their unit 1 presentations.

4 Sector Update

With increasing pressure from other regulatory bodies such as SASC (Standards for Assessment) and the BDA (British Dyslexia Association) particularly with regard to Level 7 and standards of assessing and reporting, the onus is now on centres to have candidates ready for APC (Assessment Practising Certificate) regulations. This has increased the evidence required and in turn ensures that candidates are better prepared to meet these requirements.

OCR centres are also ideally placed to deliver the ongoing CPD both at Level 5 and Level 7 that candidates need for the renewal of Practising Certificates now the recommendation for Level 5 as well as Level 7.

The British Dyslexia Association continues to recognise these awards at each level. At Level 5 there is also recognition for candidates who do not have Qualified Teacher Status.

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