Assignment brief

Issued September 2013

OCR Level 4 Cambridge Technical Diploma in IT

Unit 2: Information Systems in Organisations

Please note:

This OCR Cambridge assignment may be used to provide evidence for the unit identified above. Alternatively, centres may 'tailor' or modify the brief within permitted parameters (see Information for Teachers). It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that any modifications made to this brief allow learners to meet all the assessment criteria and provide sufficient opportunity for learners to demonstrate achievement across the full range of grades. The assessment criteria themselves must not be changed.

The Ofqual Unit Number for this unit is:

Information Systems in Organisations   M/601/1444

OCR assignment brief remains live for the life of these qualifications.

Guidance For Centres

1 General

1.1 OCR assignment briefs are issued free to centres on approval and are available to download from our website: www.ocr.org.uk/

1.2 This assignment brief has been designed to provide learners with suggested approaches that will allow learners access to all assessment criteria across the grades in this unit. Learners will need to take part in a planned learning programme that covers the underpinning knowledge and skills of the unit.

2 Before carrying out the assignment

2.1 Candidates should be provided with a copy of the Candidate Information section of this assignment.

2.2 If learners carry out any preparation prior to undertaking the tasks, there is no time limit.

2.3 The assignment is based on a generic scenario. See section 8 'Scope of permitted model assignment modification' for further guidance.

3 When completing the assignment

3.1 The amount of time needed to produce evidence may vary depending on the nature of the tasks and the ability of individual candidates.

3.2 Each candidate must produce individual and authentic evidence for each task within the assignment brief.

3.3 Centre staff may give support and guidance to learners. This support and guidance must focus on checking that learners understand what is expected of them and giving general feedback that enables the learner to take the initiative in making improvements, rather than detailing what amendments should be made. It is not acceptable for tutors to provide model answers or to work through answers in detail or to specifically detail what amendments should be made.

3.4 Learners may use information from any relevant source to help them with producing evidence for the tasks. They must be aware of the need to cite and reference any sources and of the risk of plagiarism.

3.5 Candidates must be guided on the use of information from sources to ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.

4 After completing the assignment

4.1 Learners' evidence is assessed by the centre's assessor against the qualification specification contained in the Centre Handbook. When grading learners' work, centres must use the assessment and grading criteria in the unit. For further information about assessment, please refer to the section on Assessment in the Centre Handbook.

4.2 Assessors' decisions must be quality assured across the centre through an internal moderation process. For further information about internal moderation, please refer to the section on Assessment and Centre Assessor and Quality Assurance Personnel Requirements in the *Centre Handbook*.

5   Presentation of work

  5.1   Centres should discourage learners from excessive use of plastic wallets for presentation of their evidence as this may hinder the assessment process. Instead, centres should encourage learners to present their work so that it is easily accessible, e.g. spiral bound, stapled booklet, treasury tag, or digital media.

6   Acceptable evidence

  6.1   For guidance on the generation and collection of evidence, please refer to the section on Assessment in the Centre Handbook.

7   Reworking the assignment

  7.1   If learners do **not** meet **all** of the assessment criteria at the **pass** grade, further work will be required.

  7.2   Tutors may give feedback to learners to support and guide them in producing evidence to the required standard. The feedback must only be general feedback that enables the learner to take the initiative in making improvements, rather than detailing what amendments should be made. It is not acceptable for tutors to provide model answers or to work through answers in detail or to specifically detail what amendments should be made.

  7.3   If learners need to do further work, they can continue to use the same assignment brief.

8   Scope of permitted assignment brief modification

  8.1   The assignment brief is designed to give suggested approaches to enable the learner to demonstrate the autonomy and accountability required of a learner at this level. The set of tasks form a coherent whole addressing all the assessment criteria and allowing access to the full range of grades. Centres may choose to provide case studies or scenarios for learners.

  You must not change the following:

- the assessment criteria

- the grading

- the requirements for supervision and authentication as described in the Centre Handbook (Section 5 - Assessment).

  OCR has ensured that in the language used and the tasks and scenario provided we have avoided discrimination, bias and stereotyping and support equality and diversity. In the development of qualifications and assessments, we use the guidance given in the Ofqual publication *Fair Access by Design*. Notably this includes:

- using language and layout in assessment materials that does not present barriers to learners

- using stimulus and source materials in assessment materials (where appropriate) that do not present barriers to learners.

  If centres wish to develop their own assignments, we strongly advise that staff responsible for modifying the model assignment and the quality assurance of it refer to the publication *Fair Access by Design*.

Tutor Guidance

These tasks have been designed to enable learners to develop and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of information systems in organisations. They must understand the information requirements of functional areas, be able to assess defined information systems, and be able to describe differing management requirements of information systems.

The scenario is generic and can be adapted (see scope of permitted model assignment modification under Guidance for Centres) based on the opportunity available to the learners – involvement within various types of product or service delivery would be beneficial.

The written evidence produced for this assignment should be largely free from spelling and grammar errors. Learners should use the IT tools available to them and proofread carefully. They should recognise that errors look unprofessional.

For guidance on the generation and collection of evidence, please refer to the section on Assessment in the *Centre Handbook*.

These guidance notes should be used in conjunction with the unit specification and *Centre Handbook*.

The Tasks

Learners are required to base this assignment on the information of a real organisation. Support should be given to the learner to ensure they select appropriate organisations so that they can both adequately answer the Pass criteria and then have sufficient material to answer the Merit criteria.

Task 1: Information requirements of functional areas

Assessment Criteria 1.1 and 2.3 are assessed in this task

For a pass, learners must evaluate the information needs of four functional areas of **one** of the organisations which they have researched.

The learner needs to:

- evaluate the information needs of each of the functional areas (1.1)

- evaluate the suitability of information systems for each of these functional areas (2.3).

This could be evidenced as a report or presentation.

For merit (M1), the learner needs to examine interdependencies of the information requirements of these functional areas, so tutor guidance is required to ensure that the selected functional areas share common information.

For distinction (D1), learners develop a generic strategy/plan for evaluating the interdependencies of information systems within an organisation's functional areas.

Task 2: Assess a defined information system

Assessment Criteria 2.2 and 3.1 are assessed in this task

For a pass, learners must investigate information systems and show how they used one to generate valid, accurate and useful information. Learners also need to evaluate alternative methods of using an information system and identify current trends and developments.

The learner needs to:

- investigate the current trends in using information systems applications to solve business problems in two functional areas (2.2)

- use an information system to generate valid, accurate and useful information for a given problem (3.1)

- evaluate alternative methods for solving the problem (3.2).

This could be evidenced as a report or presentation.

For merit (M2), learners should keep a diary to record their work on criterion 3.1. Based on this record they then could critically reflect on their performance in relation to the completion of task 2.

For distinction (D2), learners could show how they would apply strategies to develop their own knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance their capacity to perform similar tasks.

Task 3: Describe differing management requirements of information systems

Assessment criteria 2.1 is assessed in this task

For a pass, learners must describe an information system appropriate for each of operational, tactical and strategic management to aid them in the decision-making process within defined functional areas.

The learner needs to:

- describe three appropriate information systems stating the function each performs (P2.1).

This could be evidenced as a report or presentation.

For merit (M3), learners could independently prepare a specification for the three information systems for one of the large organisations which they researched. Selection of an appropriate organisation could greatly simplify this task.

For distinction (D3), learners could communicate the appropriate use of these information systems to a non-specialist IT audience, for example, the managers within an organisation.

Assignment brief: Level 4 Cambridge Technical Diploma in IT

Information systems in organisations

LEARNING OUTCOMES

LO1: Understand information needs within different functional areas of organisations

Evaluate the information needs of the different functional areas of an organisation.

LO2: Be able to compare information systems

Describe different types of information systems

Investigate the current trends in using information systems applications to solve business problems

Evaluate the suitability of information systems for different functional areas of an organisation.

LO3: Be able to use information systems to produce management information

Use an information system to generate valid, accurate and useful information for a given problem

Evaluate alternative methods of solving the problem.

In order to access a Merit grade, you will also need to:

Analyse concepts, theories or principles to formulate own responses to situations

Analyse own knowledge, understanding and skills to define areas for development

Exercise autonomy and judgement when implementing established courses of action.

In order to access a Distinction grade, you will also need to complete the following in addition to the Merit criteria:

Evaluate approaches to develop strategies in response to actual or anticipated situations

Evaluate and apply strategies to develop own knowledge, understanding and skills

Determine, direct and communicate new courses of action.

Introduction to the Tasks

Background

You will need to research:

Large organisations that have an international presence such as:

- sales operations in different countries
- manufacturing sites in different countries
- large-scale service industries.

You will need to look at two organisations from the following areas: production, retail and professional services, e.g.: Jaguar, House of Fraser, Goldman Sachs.

For the selected organisations, you will examine:

- the functional areas of these organisations
- the management roles (operational, tactical, strategic) within each functional area.

Review the information systems (e.g. decision support systems, management information systems, transaction processing systems) which support these management decisions.

Tasks

Task 1: Information requirements of functional areas

Assessment Criteria 1.1, 2.3

You need to evaluate the information needs of four functional areas of **one** of the organisations you have researched.

Your evidence will be:

A report that:

- evaluates the information needs of each of the functional areas (1.1)

- evaluates the suitability of information systems for each of these functional areas (2.3).

An example for meeting the merit criteria (M1) might be to explore interdependencies across different functional areas. Consider strengths and weaknesses and develop a plan for improvement(s).

An example for meeting the distinction criteria (D1) might be to develop a generic strategy/plan for evaluating the interdependencies of information systems within an organisation's functional areas.

Task 2: Assessing a defined information system

Assessment Criteria 2.2, 3.1

You need to investigate information systems and show how you used one to generate valid, accurate and useful information. You also need to evaluate alternative methods of using an information system and identify current trends and developments.

Your evidence will be:

A report that:

- shows the findings from your investigation regarding the current trends in using information systems applications to solve business problems in two functional areas (2.2)

- shows how you used an information system to generate valid, accurate and useful information for a given problem (3.1)

- shows how you evaluated alternative methods for solving the problem. Examples of alternative methods could be using tables or graphs (3.2).

An example for meeting the merit criteria (M2) might be to critically reflect on your performance in relation to the completion of Task 2. Identify the effect your personal knowledge, skills and understanding had on the outcome of the task. In light of this, you should recommend areas for personal development.

An example for meeting distinction criteria (D2) might be to show how you would apply strategies to develop your own knowledge, understanding and skills to enhance your capacity to perform similar tasks.

Task 3: Describing different management requirements of information systems

Assessment Criteria 2.1

Describe an information system appropriate for each of operational, tactical and strategic management to aid them in the decision-making process within the defined functional areas you identified in Task 1.

Your evidence will be:

A report that:

- describes three appropriate information systems stating the function which each performs (2.1).

An example for meeting the merit criteria (M3) might be to independently prepare a specification for the three information systems for one of the large organisations which you researched.

An example for meeting the distinction criteria (D3) might be to communicate the appropriate use of these.