

Vocational Qualifications (QCF, NVQ, NQF)

Occupational Health and Safety

Level 3 – Revised 2008 specification Occupational Health and Safety – **03943**

Level 3 Certificate (NVQ) Occupational Health and Safety – **10176**

Level 5 Diploma (NVQ) Occupational Health and Safety Practice – **10177**

OCR Report to Centres 2013-2014

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

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

- **Structure and content**

This report is based on the content of 36 reports received from the 4 External Verifiers (EVs) following visits to 26 centres.

Throughout the year centres have been completing qualifications with candidates and from the last entry date of 31 December 2013, there have been two additional registrations, both on level 5.

Centres have, in the main, achieved a high percentage completion rate of candidates with very few withdrawals. This is primarily due to the fact that centres clearly identify suitable candidates at the outset and confirm their suitability with appropriate action planning at the induction stage.

Centres continue to offer candidates diverse means of support and assessment which range from the traditional observation whilst on the job to the more technology based webinars and on line assessment with paper free portfolios. All candidates interviewed were very supportive of the centres and their assessment teams and way in which they were supported in gathering and submitting the evidence.

During the year centres have made excellent use of the exemplification both in their assessment planning and at induction when they were able to show candidates what types of evidence they would be required to produce. Within centres where the assessment is primarily candidate led the candidates were also making full use of the document to enable them to plan their workload in a manner whereby they would be generating suitable evidence.

Throughout the year the EVs noted that centres were disappointed that OCR was withdrawing the qualification but all registered their appreciation for a much valued suite of qualifications.

Assessment Team:

Reports confirm that within the majority of centres there are sufficient assessors to meet candidate assessment requirements. The majority of assessors are highly qualified health and safety practitioners at the appropriate level.

Candidates interviewed in all centres confirmed their support for the assessors and their appreciation of the guidance and support they had received from them.

Assessment within the centres is robust and the standard of the evidence produced by candidates regularly exceeds the required standard and the portfolios are well presented.

The majority of the candidates have been at the diploma level 5 with smaller numbers at the level 3 and the stand-alone unit 8. These numbers are reducing owing to the final registration for the health and safety qualifications on 31 December 2013.

EVs continue to support centres with recommendations on best practice within the assessment and internal verification process, cpd and centre policy and procedures.

EV reports continue to confirm that work product is the primary source of evidence and as such is of a consistently high standard. It is pleasing to note that some more centres are using a holistic approach to assessment rather than simply identifying evidence to meet criteria. Any weaknesses identified during this period were around poor planning of the assessment action plans which occasionally lacked sufficient detail to support the candidate.

Resources:

Centres remain well-resourced in terms of assessors and equipment with some centres demonstrating up to date facilities, video cameras and audio recorders, web conferencing facilities and access to the latest health and safety publications all for the benefit of candidates. There have been no issues around the centre resources.

Candidate Support:

All candidates receive an induction and initial assessment to confirm their suitability for the qualification. This ensures that all candidates have an understanding of the appeals procedure. If a candidate is identified at this early stage to have a weakness, then an individually tailored package of additional support or training can be action planned.

Centres continue to provide good candidate information packages with details of the assessment team and the assessment process.

The majority of centres continue to use a similar assessment methodology which requires the same type of evidence ie observation, witness testimony, work product, professional discussion. Any deviations from this procedure are identified at an early stage in the process and the candidate's assessment is tailored to meet their specified needs.

Assessment and Verification:

Assessment continues to be suitably robust and the internal verifiers maintain a regular and documented process of assessor monitoring.

Centres have well established assessment teams and internal verification is mixed between the formative and summative, with the majority being of the summative. Centres are continually encouraged to undertake the formative verification at an earlier stage in the process.

EVs found that centres hold regular team meetings to maintain the standards across all the team, these meetings are minuted and these are examined by the EVs at each visit.

Management Systems and Records:

Most EV reports provide confirmation and positive comments on management systems and records with regular reviews and updates on centre policies and procedures.

Reports also confirm that centres provide easy access to centre and candidate records, progress, achievements, Interval Verifier (IV) and assessor activities. New assessors and IVs have been seen with their original certificates either at the visit or following a recommendation at the following visit.

Assessment Summary:

Reports from EVs continue to confirm that the qualifications are well received by the candidates and the assessment team. Assessment continues to be robust across all qualifications.

EVs report that there is generally a feeling of disappointment amongst the centres that OCR are withdrawing the qualification. Centres have been, and still are very supportive of OCR and the standards they set which they continue to regard very highly and they genuinely regret the termination of the qualification.

2 Sector Developments

During this year the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have revised the Managing fir Health and Safety (HSG 65) document, Successful Health and Safety Management and have brought it more in line with the current trend towards adopting the 18001 approach ie Plan, Do, Check, Act.

In 2015 the Construction Design and Management Regulations will be revised, This will do away with the position of Co-ordinator, a position which is an advisory role, This will mean that more responsibilities will be passed to persons who may not be as familiar with the health and safety aspects of the job and there may be a requirement for additional training.

These are the major impact changes which although significant should not have a detrimental impact on the qualification as the majority of candidates will be completing before they have significant effect.

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