

## **Vocational Qualifications (QCF, NVQ, NQF)**

### **Administration (Business Professional)**

Level 1 Award Administration (Business Professional) – **03952**

Level 1 Certificate Administration (Business Professional) – **03953**

Level 1 Diploma Administration (Business Professional) – **03954**

Level 2 Award Administration (Business Professional) – **03955**

Level 2 Certificate Administration (Business Professional) – **03956**

Level 2 Diploma Administration (Business Professional) – **03957**

Level 3 Certificate Administration (Business Professional) – **03959**

Level 3 Diploma Administration (Business Professional) – **03963**

Level 4 Diploma Administration (Business Professional) – **03968**

## **OCR Report to Centres September 2014 – August 2015**

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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# Levels 1-4 Administration (Business Professional)

## 1 The qualifications and standards

- **Structure and content**

### **Centre assessment:**

Findings: Most centres have delivered and assessed these schemes for a number of years and the overall quality of the work produced by the learners is of a high standard. The standard of English has also improved overall, although there are still occasions when poor grammar, punctuation and spelling has not been challenged by the assessor and as a result it compromised the learners' opportunities to achieve the unit; this is particularly true of Centres new to the schemes. However, clear feedback from the external moderators has resulted in improvement in future submissions in almost all cases, although there are still issues when the assessor appears not to have read or received the report. Direct contact between the assessor and the external moderator is not permitted, however, more Centres are taking the useful approach of sending a commentary with the evidence explaining any changes e.g. the changing of dates for travelling or real work opportunities used instead. This is beneficial as the moderator can confidently review the work knowing that they correctly interpreted the intentions of the candidate. Centres have tended not to take advantage of Subject Expert Visits or Advisory Visits either prior to commencing delivery of the schemes or to support ongoing developments during the year.

Reception and post room activities are often evidenced through real work and this is commendable.

Opportunities for the learners to carry out real tasks rather than work through model assignments are encouraged.

Many assessors provide detailed feedback to the learners on the evidence: electronic evidence can make this problematic but more and more cases are arising where feedback is given in the form of comment boxes. Detailed feedback allows the external moderator to better understand how the assessor has interpreted the evidence, thus allowing for more focused feedback.

Citation and referencing continues to be a challenge for a significant minority of centres. Copying directly from another source, predominantly the Internet, does not prove knowledge or understanding of the subject matter but merely that the learner can discover the knowledge and understanding that others have of the subject. It is the learners' own explanation or description which is the proof. In addition, not citing or referencing sources, quotations and images is a serious academic issue irrespective of the level of the scheme.

### **Internal Moderation:**

Findings: These schemes do not require evidence of internal moderation to be forwarded to the external moderator. However, it is a requirement for Centres to carry out such activities as it contributes to the dissemination of good practice as well resolving issues, resulting in consistent and accurate assessment across the assessing team. It is made clear in the feedback that standardisation and internal moderation is expected to be carried out to ensure the achievement of the standards when there is a lack of consistency across the scheme or schemes.

Where evidence of internal moderation is presented it is normally detailed and clearly demonstrates a good understanding of the qualification structure and content.

**Administration/Documentation:**

Finding: Centres rarely comment upon documentation, except for seeking clarification of their interpretation of the model assignment, for example, through the Customer Contact Centre.

This continues to be a lengthy business if the question or the answer needs further clarification as the question needs to be passed from the Customer Contact Centre to the Chief Moderator and the answer passed back along the chain. It would be helpful to consider collating the questions and answers and uploading these to the FAQs on a regular basis to provide Centres with the latest information available.

The Model Assignment Learner Checklist, Witness Testimonies and Submission Coversheet require signing and dating by assessors. Overall, assessors are assiduous in carrying out these tasks but there are still cases where documentation is not completed. For example, the Submission Coversheet should have the claim number written on to each copy prior to its submission to the External Moderator. This is not always completed and where there are multiple submissions, it is a time consuming process to try and identify the claim and batch. The assessor also needs to “tick” the box next to the particular scheme in order to have the correct range of units appear on the right hand side of the Submission Coversheet. Claims are received where the assessor has printed the form and then ticks the box and so no list of units appear. It may be helpful if the procedure could be more overtly stated on the form so that new or inexperienced assessors are reminded of the process.

A small number of Centres do not always ensure that the Learner Evidence Checklist is completed, leaving the external moderator to guess at the location of the evidence. This is unhelpful, not only because it is time consuming but also because the external moderator is actually assessing the evidence rather than moderating the assessor’s activities.

**OCR Support and Resources:**

Findings: The support provided to the Centres via the Customer Contact Centre is welcomed and appreciated but Centres do comment that the process is slow and time consuming. There have been calls for model answers or exemplars but these are not appropriate as the assignments are live and there is a danger that the exemplars will be seen as the correct answer. The learners are expected to develop their own ideas and, where appropriate, practise their skills in either a work-based or simulated environment. As a result, there will always be differences in approach and layout of content that can meet the assessment criteria, but these would not be encouraged through a single model answer. Some short exemplars of individual elements have been provided to give some guidance but not so much as to enable a learner to reproduce the content and attain the unit.

The Centre Handbook provides clear guidance on how the work should be presented to the external moderator as well as other useful evidence via the qualification section of the OCR website.

The unit specifications and model assignments are separately presented on the website and this militates against the Centres reading and interpreting the standards and the model assignments side by side or, preferably, sequentially. This results in a tendency for less experienced Centres and assessors to concentrate on the model assignment and ignore the unit specification which, unhappily, is last on the list of contents on the website. By reading both together the Centre has a better understanding of what is required and, should they wish to deviate from the model assignment, how to avoid missing any of the requirements of the assessment criteria.

The interpretation of the command verbs in the assessment criteria continues to be a challenge to a significant number of centres and learners, especially at the higher levels. Centres have been provided with a link to the Command Verb document produced for the Cambridge Technicals and again, there has been very positive feedback on the value of this resource.

### **Assessment Summary:**

Findings: Almost all learners attain their qualification. Where withdrawals are made it is usually due to a misunderstanding of the requirements or the level of the schemes. The evidence produced continues to improve and spelling, grammar and English errors are continuing to reduce. Most Centres are clear as to the standard required at a particular level and in many cases exceed the standard requirements.

The quality of evidence from a number of Centres has been enhanced by the inclusion of delivery by colleagues who have specialist knowledge in human resources or finance, for example.

Where units have been withdrawn, advice and guidance on how the units should be evidenced in the future is provided in the eNQF6 (Centre Feedback Form). This feedback must be available to the delivery and assessment staff as this should be acted upon for future submissions. Where the feedback is followed, this has almost always resulted in speedy enhancement of the process resulting in the candidates submitting new evidence which meets the standard.

## **2 Developments**

The Schemes continue to offer the opportunity for learners to achieve the skills required by business and which almost every business and education related news item claim that British learners lack. These schemes, with the exception of how to use social networking and producing accurate work on every occasion, provide opportunities for learners to practise and achieve the level of skills required in business. However, when the schemes are reviewed, these areas should be considered for inclusion alongside the strengthening of requirements for demonstrating achievement of the existing skills.

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