

Vocational Qualifications (QCF, NVQ, NQF)

Creative and Digital Media

Creative and Digital Media Competence Diploma Level 3 – **10323**

OCR Report to Centres – September 2017

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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.

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Creative and Digital Media Competence Diploma Level 3 – 10323

1. Overview

This verified competence scheme is delivered in the workplace and forms part of the apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media. The last year has seen a significant scaling down of the entries as a result of OCR having decided to withdraw the qualification, with no new registrations being accepted from the end of December. However, there remains a core of centres that have developed their understanding of the requirements and some continue to demonstrate a solid set of evidence portfolios.

The structure is based around a set of mandatory units together with a wide range of optional units to make up the required number of credits. The selection of what optional units are completed depends upon the nature of the apprentice's placement with an employer. The strongest evidence portfolios are when the choice of units is an excellent match for the regular workplace activities although this is not always possible given the placements available.

2. General Comments

The overall performance of candidates has been quite good over the last year. This is believed to be assisted by the growing experience of centres, assessors and IQA personnel involved with the apprenticeship delivery. Many portfolios are now including more examples of workplace projects that have been produced to a high standard. These are being supported by more thorough evidence of the knowledge based requirements, typically in learning outcome 1 (LO1) of a unit. As with any other qualification, it is important to ensure that sources of information continue to be referenced here. As a competence qualification, the skills in 'doing' an activity must be evidenced in each unit rather than knowledge of 'how to' do something. This is a quite fundamental difference to a number of vocational qualifications that is not always fully understood. In general, the standards of portfolios have shown a small but steady improvement.

It is recognised that a number of centres have experienced challenges with the availability and retention of qualified assessors and internal quality assurers/verifiers. This is an essential requirement to ensure continued NVQ compliance and an unfortunate trend has been to delay informing OCR and the allocated EQA. Centres are strongly encouraged to maintain regular contact in these situations in order to avoid unnecessary sanctions being applied.

There has been a trend for some centres to decide on a generic or core set of units for all apprentices, which often does not work well for each individual. This makes evidence generation quite fragmented and achievement difficult. The most successful centres have identified a more appropriate set of units that relates to the workplace activities rather than use a common set of units across a cohort of apprentices, especially when they are with different employers.

The use of e-portfolios is encouraged when the evidence is easily identifiable and mapped to the assessment criteria. These provide an excellent platform to store digital media work products as well as documentary evidence, both of which are fundamentally important. Paper based portfolios are still being produced by some learners and centres. This isn't a problem when supported by electronic storage of digital media work, as long as these are easily accessible on the day of the external quality assurance visit.

Despite a number of improvements seen over the last year, it is unfortunate that the scheme will not be continuing with OCR and significant changes to the apprenticeship framework and funding are on the way. It is hoped that what has been learned about verified workplace competence schemes will be transferred to alternative delivery under a new framework in the future.

3. Comments on Individual Units

Popular units are those in web graphics, marketing/interactive media, photographic work, commercial and promotional film making. Comments on the most popular units in these categories are shown below.

Web graphics and interactive media: Popular units include 25, 26, 28 and 29. These cover the preparation of assets and [body] copy for use in interactive media products, which typically is either for website or social media use. Unit 27 (animation) is completed by some although not consistently to a high standard for a Level 3 unit. A pattern of relatively simplistic 2D animated gifs is not a good approach for this unit.

Photographic work: Popular units 35, 37, 40 and 41. The inclusion of some photographic units is quite common although sometimes these are not particularly well done. The intention with any of the photographic units is that they are completed within a photographic work setting or placement so that learners to take images under a variety of circumstances including portrait, still life and for specified shoots. The units should cover a range of cameras and equipment, working in indoor and outdoor locations, with people or objects. One good example over the last year was with placement at a photographic studio. A wide range of professional photographic assignments were completed including weddings and commissions for commercial and tourist information images. On the other hand, portfolios were sometimes seen with planning for a photographic assignment (unit 40) but never actually undertaking it for unit 41, in an organisation where photography is not really part of their normal activities. What would be encouraged in the future is to only select the photographic units when there is a clear placement that enables the development and use of suitable skills. Where this is not possible, alternative units may be easier to satisfactorily achieve.

Film making: Popular units include 11, 12, 17 and 21. In one example over the last year, a learner was placed with a film maker and yet none of the video/film units were originally selected for completion. Instead, a range of more generic units was being attempted and assessment was finding it difficult to confirm the criteria were being met. Following a review, a change from the original generic set of units was made allowing the learner to use a large part of their workplace activities as evidence. This was a clear example of the importance of negotiating with employers at the start of the apprenticeship programme what work would be done and therefore what units would be suitable. In general, the assisting of larger film crews was ideal for units 17 and 21 whereas smaller independent film makers enabled excellent opportunities in units 11 and 12.

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