CAMBRIDGE NATIONALS

OCR Level 1/Level 2

Cambridge Nationals

Understanding the assessment: examined and moderated

Version 1.3 (April 2025)

ocr.org.uk/cambridgenationals

Cambridge Nationals

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Contents

Introduction

Our Cambridge Nationals are high quality, vocational qualifications aimed at 14-16 year old students. They are designed to meet the Department for Education's characteristics for Technical Awards and for inclusion on secondary schools' performance tables.

We've created this guide to share the story of our assessment approach with you. We've also developed a resource called 'Exploring our exams: a guide to our sample assessment material' to give you more information about the content and structure of the external assessment for each subject.

During the development of these exciting, practical qualifications, we talked extensively with teachers, subject experts and our senior assessment teams to influence the structure and content of the qualifications and assessment materials. We then shared our final materials with teachers to make sure that they met their needs.

"Really like the practical assessments and that students **learn** a lot of **transferable skills** that they can put on their CVs."

"It is really pleasing to see some of the views on the current course have been **listened to** and **included** in the re-development."

"This course offers **so much scope** for staff to teach to their strengths/ students to use past experiences/talk to others and it is **real life**. I am **excited** to do this."

Assessment structure

We spoke to teachers about how the qualifications are delivered at Key Stage 4. The responses told us that a three unit approach allowed for optimum teaching across the standard two years of delivery. We then developed our structures to meet this feedback and the regulatory requirements for Technical Awards.

Each qualification is 120 guided learning hours (GLH) and is marked out of a total of 190 raw marks.

Students will take 3 units in a Cambridge National qualification:

- **a mandatory externally assessed unit**
  o   assessed by an exam
  o   48 GLH

- **two non examined assessment (NEA) units**
  o   assessed by OCR-set assignments
  o   totalling 72 GLH

Where a need was identified, some qualifications contain optional units.

Students will choose one optional unit as their second NEA unit. The first NEA unit will always be mandatory. Where there are no optional units, all units are mandatory.

Teachers and subject experts said that optionality was important in some subjects to provide more breadth in the subject content, to allow students to tailor the qualifications to meet their planned progression routes and to maximise the expertise of teachers.

There are two assessment series available each year in January and June for all units. Qualification certification is also available each January and June.

The table below shows the content and structure of each qualification.

OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in…	Unit		Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Assessment Type	Duration	Weighting (UMS*)
Child Development	R057	Health and well-being for child development	M	Written exam	1 hour 15 minutes	40%
	R058	Create a safe environment and understand the nutritional needs of children from birth to five years	M	Set assignment	12-14 hours	30%
	R059	Understand the development of a child from one to five years	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
Engineering Design	R038	Principles of engineering design	M	Written exam	1 hour 15 minutes	40%
	R039	Communicating designs	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
	R040	Design evaluation and modelling	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%

*information about Raw and UMS marks is in Section 5 of the Specification.

OCR Level 1/ Level 2 Cambridge National in…	Unit		Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Assessment Type	Duration	Weighting (UMS*)
Engineering Manufacture	R014	Principles of engineering manufacture	M	Written exam	1 hour 15 minutes	40%
	R015	Manufacturing a one-off product	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
	R016	Manufacturing in quantity	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
Engineering Programmable Systems	R047	Principles of electronic and programmable systems	M	Written exam	1 hour 15 minutes	40%
	R048	Making and testing electronic circuits	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
	R049	Developing programmable systems	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
Enterprise and Marketing	R067	Enterprise and marketing concepts	M	Written exam	1 hour 15 minutes	40%
	R068	Design a business proposal	M	Set assignment	10-14 hours	30%
	R069	Market and pitch a business proposal	M	Set assignment	10-14 hours	30%
IT	R050	IT in the digital world	M	Written exam	1 hour 30 minutes	40%
	R060	Data manipulation using spreadsheets	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
	R070	Using Augmented Reality to present information	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
Creative iMedia	R093	Creative iMedia in the media industry	M	Written exam	1 hour 30 minutes	40%
	R094	Visual identity and digital graphics	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	25%
	R095	Characters and comics	O	Set assignment	12-15 hours	35%
	R096	Animation with audio	O	Set assignment	12-15 hours	35%
	R097	Interactive digital media	O	Set assignment	12-15 hours	35%
	R098	Visual imaging	O	Set assignment	12-15 hours	35%
	R099	Digital games	O	Set assignment	12-15 hours	35%

OCR Level 1/ Level 2 Cambridge National in…	Unit		Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Assessment Type	Duration	Weighting (UMS*)
Health and Social Care	R032	Principles of care in health and social care settings	M	Written exam	1 hour 15 minutes	40%
	R033	Supporting individuals through life events	M	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
	R034	Creative and therapeutic activities	O	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
	R035	Health promotion campaigns	O	Set assignment	10-12 hours	30%
Sport Science	R180	Reducing the risk of sports injuries and dealing with common medical conditions	M	Written exam	1 hour 15 minutes	40%
	R181	Applying the principles of training: fitness and how it affects skill performance	M	Set assignment	16 hours	40%
	R182	The body's response to physical activity and how technology informs this	O	Set assignment	8-10 hours	20%
	R183	Nutrition and sports performance	O	Set assignment	8-10 hours	20%
Sport Studies	R184	Contemporary issues in sport	M	Written exam	1 hour 15 minutes	40%
	R185	Performance and leadership in sports activities	M	Set assignment	16 hours	40%
	R186	Sport and the media	O	Set assignment	8-10 hours	20%
	R187	Increasing awareness of Outdoor and Adventurous Activities	O	Set assignment	8-10 hours	20%

Performance Objectives (POs)

Each Cambridge National qualification has related Performance Objectives (POs). These help to make sure that all of the qualifications are comparable in their assessment design. There are four Performance Objectives in the Cambridge Nationals qualifications, which may be contextualised for each subject:

- **PO1:** Recall knowledge and show understanding
- **PO2:** Apply knowledge and understanding
- **PO3:** Analyse and evaluate knowledge, understanding and performance
- **PO4:** Demonstrate and apply technical skills and processes

Each PO has a weighting range assigned that will be within the suite level weighting range for that PO. The balance of knowledge, understanding and skills is tailored within these ranges to be appropriate for each subject. Section 4 of the specification shows the PO weightings for the individual subject. The suite level weighting ranges applied to the Performance Objectives allow us to ensure consistency of assessment approach across the Cambridge Nationals qualifications. In all qualifications:

- **PO1** is assessed only in the exam.
- **PO2** and **PO3** are assessed in both the exam and NEA units.
- **PO4** is assessed only in the NEA units.

The table below shows the PO weighting ranges for the Cambridge Nationals qualifications:

| PO	EA unit target range	2 x NEA units target range	Overall weighting
PO1	12-22%	n/a	12-22%
PO2	10-20%	10-20%	20-40%
PO3	5-10%	10-20%	15-30%
PO4	n/a	15-30%	15-30%
Overall weighting of assessments	**40%**	**60%**	**100%**

Grading

All results are awarded on the following scale:

Level 2 – Distinction* (*2), Distinction (D2), Merit (M2), Pass (P2)

Level 1 – Distinction (D1), Merit (M1), Pass (P1) and Fail/Unclassified

You can find more information about grading and awarding grades in **Section 5** of the specification.
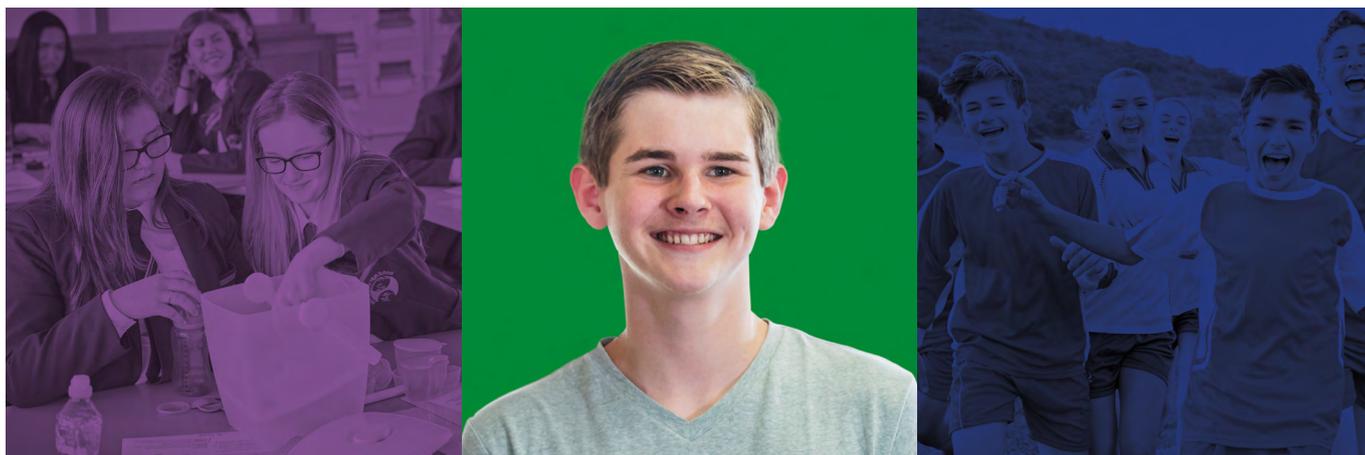
External assessment

The externally assessed unit is 48 GLH and represents 40% of the qualification and its total marks. This unit contains the knowledge and understanding that supports or underpins the subject content and the rest of the qualification.

When we spoke to teachers, they told us that students are familiar with the approximate 'one mark per minute' approach (allowing for some additional time to read contextual information). This also aligned with our research into the number of marks needed to support reliable assessment in the examined units.

So, each exam is worth 70 marks and is:

- 1 hour 15 minutes or
- 1 hour 30 minutes if additional time is needed for reading/drawing.

Most exams are broken down into sections and sample content from across the unit (Section A and Section B, with Sport Studies also having a Section C). 'Exploring our exams: a guide to our sample assessment material' for each subject gives more detail about the sections.

The exam must be taken as **terminal assessment**. This means that students must take their exam in the final assessment series of their course. Non examined assessment (NEA) units can be submitted in the same series as the exam or an earlier series but the exam must be taken in the final series.

If a student takes the exam in a series before their work for NEA units is submitted, this is considered as a 'practice' attempt and will not contribute to their final qualification grade. The student must take their exam again in their final assessment series and that exam result will be used towards the student's final qualification grade.

We have produced a support document to give you more information about meeting the terminal rule requirements. This is called the Cambridge Nationals: terminal rule guide.

The exams will be timetabled so that all students sit the exam at the same time on the same day.

Command words

We have a common set of command words that we will use in our exams. Each word has a definition which shows what a student will be expected to do when it's used. You can share these with your students when you are teaching and preparing them for the exam.

The exact response expected to a command word will depend on the context in which we use it, so students must remember that the rest of the wording in the question is also very important. Students should read the full question carefully to be sure of what they are being asked to do. 'Exploring our exams: a guide to our sample assessment material' for each subject shows how the command words may be used in context.

Word(s)	Students will….
Analyse	Separate or break down information into parts and identify their characteristics or elements. Explain the pros and cons of a topic or argument and make reasoned comments. Explain the impacts of actions using a logical chain of reasoning.
Annotate	Add information, for example, to a table, diagram or graph until it is final. Add all the needed or appropriate parts.
Calculate	Get a numerical answer showing how it has been worked out.
Choose	Select an answer from options given.
Circle	Select an answer from options given.
Compare and contrast	Give an account of the similarities and differences between two or more items or situations.
Complete	Add all the needed or appropriate parts. Add information, for example, to a table, diagram or graph until it is final.
Create	Produce a visual solution to a problem (for example: a mind map, flowchart or visualisation).
Describe	Give an account including all the relevant characteristics, qualities or events. Give a detailed account of.
Discuss	Present, analyse and evaluate relevant points (for example, for/against an argument).
Draw	Produce a picture or diagram.
Evaluate	Make a reasoned qualitative judgement considering different factors and using available knowledge/experience.
Explain	Give reasons for and/or causes of. Use words or phrases such as 'because', 'therefore' or 'this means' in answers.
Fill in	Add all the needed or appropriate parts. Add information, for example, to a table, diagram or graph until it is final.
Identify	Select an answer from options given. Recognise, name or provide factors or features.
Justify	Give good reasons for offering an opinion or reaching a conclusion.
Label	Add information, for example, to a table, diagram or graph until it is final. Add all the necessary or appropriate parts.
Outline	Give a short account, summary or description.
State	Give factors or features. Give short, factual answers.

Assessment

Accessibility principles

Our exam papers and associated materials are developed with our accessibility principles in mind. The table below tells you a little more about the principles and rationale underpinning our approach for the Cambridge Nationals.

Group	No.	Accessibility principle	Why?
Look and feel of the paper	1	**Layout (clear for all)** • We use Arial 11 font. • We put in enough space for responses and room for working calculations where needed. • If a question asks for two or more points, the answer lines will start with numbers to show where students should write each point of their answer.	So that text is easy to read. To make it easy for students to add their responses/do their workings.
	2	**Tone** • We avoid using overly complicated language and grammatical constructions. • We use contexts and vocabulary that are current and appropriate for students. • We use consistent language throughout. • We use technical words appropriately to underpin the subject being assessed.	So that we can assess understanding of the subject without the language of the questions forming an obstacle.
	3	Text is generally left aligned and left justified.	Text that is left aligned and left justified is easier to read.
	4	We don't use italics in questions. Instead, we use bold for emphasis.	Italics can be hard to read.
	5	Images, diagrams and data are only used where they genuinely support the question. Where possible, images, diagrams and data are presented on the same page as the question or on the facing page.	Images can be distracting for some students. To avoid unnecessary page turning.
	6	We don't wrap text around images/diagrams/graphs.	So that images, diagrams and graphs can be seen clearly.
	7	If students need to do something with an image/diagram/graph, it will be centred with enough space around it to do their working.	So that students can write in their answers without difficulty.
Assessment approach	8	Command words all come from the defined list of command words for the Cambridge Nationals qualifications.	To ensure the requirements of each question are clear.
	9	We keep negative questions to a minimum.	Used well, negative questions can be a good way of testing understanding but can also easily lead to confusion. We only use negatives where it is the most appropriate approach to take.
	10	We keep the context to minimum. Where context is needed to answer a question, we present it in as clear a way as possible, for example by grouping sentences by theme or using bulleted or numbered lists.	To ensure students don't have to spend time reading and processing superfluous information and to ensure information is presented in the clearest possible way.

Unit content

We shared different unit templates and styles with teachers to gain feedback, so that we could present the content as clearly as possible.

The content for each unit is made up of several topic areas. Each topic area has related teaching content. A direct question may be asked about any content in the teaching content column.

The externally assessed unit also contains a breadth and depth column. This is designed to make clear the breadth and depth of teaching needed for the teaching content and indicates the range of knowledge and understanding that may be assessed in the exam. This column also confirms any aspects that we **do not** expect to be taught as part of the content. These are included as 'does not include' statements.

Students will need to know or understand the content. The table below explains what we mean by know and understand.

Know	Be able to identify or recognise a given item, for example on a diagram. Use direct recall to answer a question, for example the definition of a term.
Understand	To assess and evidence the perceived meaning of something in greater depth than straight identification or recall. Understanding will be expressed and presented using terms such as: how; why; when; reasons for; benefits and drawbacks of; advantages and disadvantages of; purpose of; suitability of; recommendations for improvement; pros and cons; appropriateness of something to/in different contexts.

Any item(s) that should be taught as knowledge only will start with the word 'know' in the breadth and depth column.

All other content is expected to be taught as understanding.
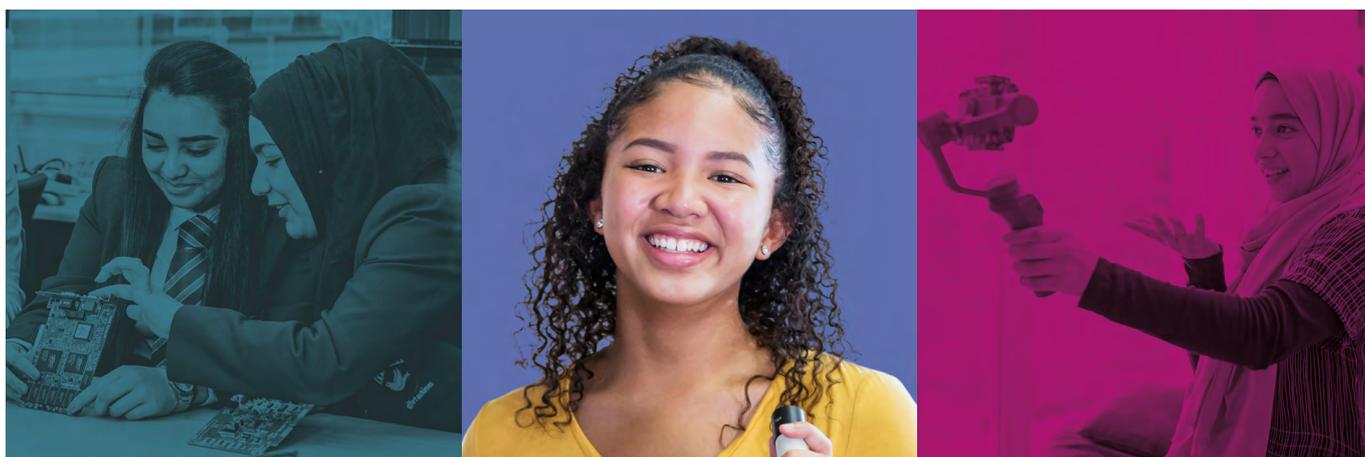
Question types

The exam is designed to test breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of the externally assessed unit's content, using a range of question styles. These are generally categorised as:

- Short answer questions – between 1 and 2 marks
- Medium response questions – between 3 and 6 marks
- Extended response questions – between 6 and 9 marks

We have developed an 'Exploring our exams: a guide to our sample assessment material' for each subject to give you more information about the structure and design of each Cambridge National's exam and the types of questions that they will include.

Short answer questions

These questions may:

- assess any topic area

- assess POs 1, 2 or 3

Short answer questions allow:

- students to show knowledge and/or understanding in a range of response styles

- students to show understanding of both simple and more complex ideas, without necessarily needing a written response or multi-line answer

- exams to have broad specification coverage

Examples of short answer questions

Enterprise and Marketing

From our Sample Assessment Material R067/01 Question 1

Put a tick (✓) in the box next to the **one** correct answer for each question.

1   Which of these is a risk that an entrepreneur could experience when they start a new business?

(a)   Limited liability

(b)   Opportunity to make a profit

(c)   Personal relationship issues

(d)   Self-satisfaction

[1]

Question	Answer	Marks
SECTION A		
1	Indicative content: **C**	1

Sport Studies

From our Sample Assessment Material R184 Question 6

6 Identify **one** example of sporting technology used by officials and describe **one** way it has helped the officials in a named sporting activity.

Example of sporting technology:

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

How it has helped the officials to improve the accuracy of their decision making:

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

[2]

6			**One mark sub-max for identifying an example of technology, for example:** **Video referee/VAR** **Cricket 3rd umpire** **Tennis Hawkeye** **Cricket Hotspot** **One mark sub-max** for how the technology helps fair play/ accuracy of officiating specific to sport it is used in. 1. Video referee – replaying part of sport, for example VAR offside/handball in football 2. Cricket 3rd umpire – access to TV to replay disputed situations such as disputed catches 3. Tennis Hawkeye – see if ball is outside line, helps accuracy of decision 4. Cricket – hot spot – see if ball has hit bat or pad.	2	Accept other valid answers. Ways must relate to the piece of technology and sport identified to be awarded a mark. Answer must relate to how it has helped **officials**.

Medium response questions

These questions may:

• be 3, 4, 5 or 6 mark questions

• have a numerical value within them, for example two reasons, two benefits, two advantages

• assess any topic area

• assess POs 1, 2 or 3

Medium response questions allow students to:

• show understanding in a range of response styles

• demonstrate to us that they understand concepts and terms from the specification by applying them in different contexts

• make a point (for example, identification) and then expand on this identification to secure additional marks

Examples of medium response questions

Engineering Programmable Systems

From our Sample Assessment Material R047/01 Question 12(a)(iii)

(iii) The current flowing through the resistor arrangement is 2 mA.

Using Ohm's Law calculate the potential difference across the arrangement.

Give your answer using the correct unit and show all your working.

....Potential difference =……..………..Unit =…………..

[4]

| 12 | (a) | (iii) | Potential difference = **12**
Unit = V

Workings:
2 mA = 0.002 A
V=IR / 0.002 x 6000 | 4 | Correct answer seen award **3** marks.
Correct unit 1 mark.

Otherwise mark workings:
1 mark for conversion of 2 mA to 0.002 A
1 mark for correct formula (SOI)

Allow ecf from **12 (a) (ii)** for their resistance value. |

Child Development

From our Sample Assessment Material R057/01 Question 1(d)

(d) At the antenatal clinic Anika receives an appointment for her **first** ultrasound scan.

Identify and explain **two** reasons for this scan.

1 ....

....

....

2 ....

....

....

[4]

1	(d)		Up to **two** marks for each reason explained.
			
			Any two from:
			
			• to see how far along Anika's pregnancy is (1)
			   o so, the baby's due date can be calculated (1)
			• to check Anika's baby's development (1)
			   o so any abnormal conditions can be detected. (1)
			• to check the number of babies (1)
			   o as multiple babies may require more monitoring/care. (1)
			• that Anika's baby is growing in the right place (1)
			   o because an ectopic pregnancy is dangerous to Anika. (1)
			• to check that the placenta is in the correct position/placenta praevia/low lying (1)
			   o as it will make a vaginal delivery dangerous/Anika would have to have a caesarean section. (1)
			
			Award credit for any other appropriate response
				4	1 mark for each reason given, up to a maximum of 2 reasons.
					
					1 mark for explaining each reason, up to a maximum of 2 marks.
					
					Reasons given must relate to the dating ultrasound scan as context is the **first** ultrasound scan.
					
					Do **not** accept
					• reference to anomaly scan
					• 'if anything is wrong with the baby' this is too vague to be awarded a mark

Extended response questions

These questions may:

• be 6, 8, or 9 mark questions

• assess any topic area

• assess POs 2 or 3

Extended response questions allow students to:

• show their ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning

• pull together acquired knowledge and understanding into one cohesive narrative

• produce extended prose in a specific context provided to frame the student's response

• give responses in a logical and structured way

• evidence their analytical and evaluative skills in relation to a given scenario.

Examples of extended response questions

Creative iMedia

From our Sample Assessment Material R093/01 Question 17(b)

17　**Fig.5** is a draft of a visualisation diagram for a static digital advert that will be used in a social media campaign.

The static digital advert will be used to promote the clothing range on social media and websites.

The visualisation diagram will be shown to Quixsport for approval.
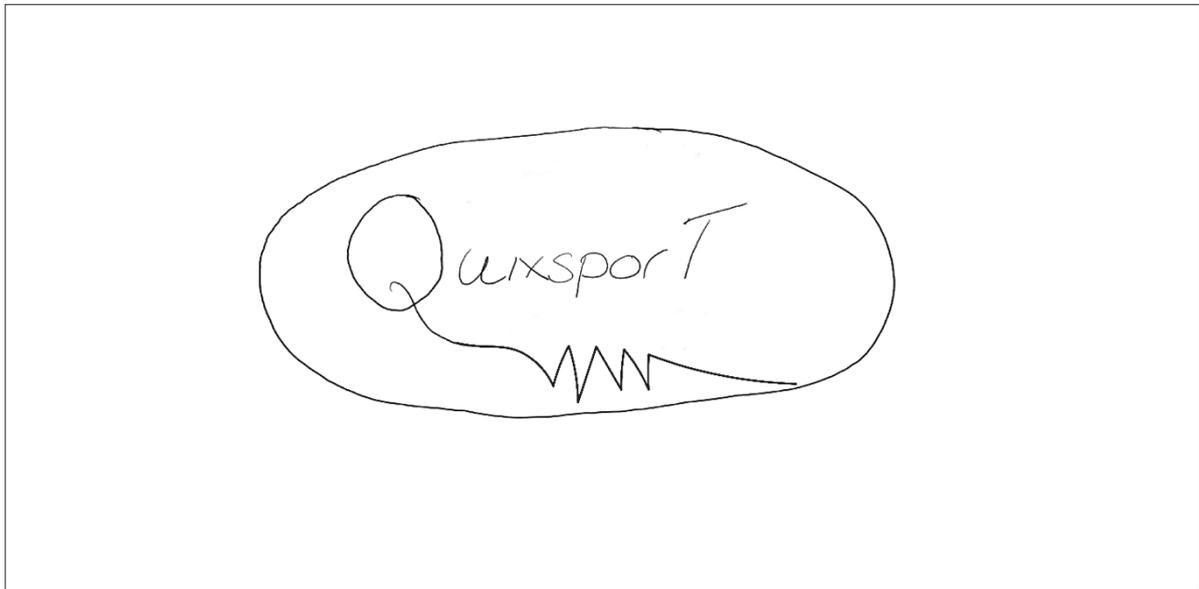
Fig.5

(b)　Create an improved version of the draft visualisation diagram in **Fig.5.**

Marks will be awarded for:

- Relevant components and conventions used
- Layout
- Annotations that explain how the improvements better meet Quixsport's requirements.

[9]

(b)		Indicative content	9	**Level 3 (high) 7-9 marks**

<table>
<tr><td>(b)</td><td colspan="2">Indicative content

Students will produce an improved version of the visualisation diagram that should better meet the client's requirements. The diagram needs to show that the static digital graphic will promote the clothing (purpose) and will allow Quixsport to clearly see how this will happen.

Marks are awarded for:
Clarity of idea
Relevance of content (format, styles, suitability)
Components of visualisation diagram used
Images
Shapes
Colours/Colour scheme – by the use of annotations/hatching/shading
Font styles
Font sizes
Positioning/Layout information
Text – slogan, branding
Justifications for improvements e.g.
Promotes products
Appearance of static digital graphic
Use of a house style for company
Consideration of distribution channels
Consideration of devices for viewing</td><td>9</td><td>Level 3 (high) 7-9 marks
A comprehensive document which shows detailed understanding:
A range of suggested improvements are identified.
Improvements cover a range of components
Conventions are effectively applied
Justifications show detailed knowledge and understanding of the suitability of the document to meet the client's requirements.
Level 2 (mid) 4-6 marks
An adequate document which shows sound understanding:
Some suggested improvements are identified.
Improvements cover some components
Conventions are adequately applied
Justifications show sound knowledge and understanding of the suitability of the document to meet the client's requirements.
Level 1 (low) 1-3 marks
A basic document which shows limited understanding:
Few suggested improvements are identified.
Improvements cover few components
Conventions are applied in a limited way
Justifications show limited knowledge and understanding of the suitability of the document to meet the client's requirements.
0 marks
Response is not worthy of credit</td></tr>
</table>

Health and social care

From our Sample Assessment Material R032/01 Question 2(d)

(d) Leo, the day centre manager, wants to improve the staff's understanding of safeguarding.

Leo arranges:

- regular training and updates on safeguarding procedures for all staff
- a personal copy of the safeguarding policy for each member of staff
- for a named member of staff to be responsible for safeguarding.

Evaluate how Leo's actions help staff improve their safeguarding practice.

Your evaluation should include:

- strengths of each of Leo's three actions
- weaknesses of each of Leo's three actions.

....

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....**[8]**

Question		Answer	Mark	Guidance
2	(d)	Evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of Leo's actions might include: **Regular training and updates on safeguarding procedures for all staff:** ✓ will equip staff with current knowledge of up-to-date practices in supporting and protecting individuals ✓ training raises awareness of safeguarding issues ✓ best practice is shared ✓ having regular meetings can create an open environment where concerns can be raised ✗ attending training takes up time when staff could be working ✗ staff may not want to stay late for training after a day's work ✗ some staff may be absent and miss the training so unaware of the information covered **A personal copy of the safeguarding policy for each member of staff:** ✓ guides staff in procedures to follow ✓ gives staff confidence as they know the correct way to deal with safeguarding issues / situations ✓ staff will know the current practices in safeguarding and protecting individuals ✗ might lose their copy of the policy ✗ might not bother to read it **A named member of staff to be responsible for safeguarding** ✓ someone to answer staff questions; give accurate advice ✓ qualified to give support and advice ✓ ensures staff will be working within the law and providing appropriate care and support ✗ may feel uncomfortable talking to that particular person ✗ might not know that member of staff ✗ the person may not be available when needed **Award credit for any other appropriate response**	8	**Level 3 (high) 6-8 marks** A **thorough** discussion showing **detailed** understanding of the strengths **and** weaknesses of Leo' actions in helping staff improve their safeguarding practice. Makes relevant points, **many** of which are developed. All **three** of Leo's actions considered. **Consistently** uses appropriate terminology. **Level 2 (mid) 3-5 marks** An **adequate** discussion showing **sound** understanding of the strengths **and** weaknesses of Leo' actions in helping staff improve their safeguarding practice. Makes relevant points, **some** of which are developed. At least **two** of Leo's actions considered. Uses **some** appropriate terminology. **Level 1 (low) 1-2 marks** A **brief** discussion which shows **limited** understanding of the strengths **and/or** weaknesses of Leo' actions in helping staff improve their safeguarding practice. Points made **may not** be wholly relevant or developed. At least **one** of Leo's actions considered. **Little or no** use of appropriate terminology. **0 marks** Response is not worthy of credit.

Non examined assessment (NEA) units

The DfE's technical guidance allows up to 60% of a qualification to be non examined assessment. These qualifications are designed as technical awards that evidence proficiency and application of knowledge, understanding and skills in a subject, and so are mostly practical in nature. When we spoke to teachers, they also told us that many of their vocational students engage better with more practical, skills-based learning. So, we developed qualifications with 60% non examined assessment.

Students must take two NEA units. These total 72 GLH and 60% of the qualification's total marks. Each qualification has at least one mandatory NEA unit.

The following qualifications have **all mandatory units** (no optional NEA units):

Child Development
Engineering Design
Engineering Manufacture
Engineering Programmable System
Enterprise and Marketing
IT

The following qualifications have **one mandatory** and **one from a choice of optional NEA** units:

Creative iMedia

Health and Social Care

Sport Science

Sport Studies

The NEA units:

- are made up of several topic areas with associated teaching content which details what must be taught as part of each topic area.

- have an exemplification column that provides more information about, and examples relating to, the teaching content. This helps to exemplify the teaching expected so that students are equipped to successfully complete their assignments.

- are mostly skills based and are assessed in a practical way through an OCR-set assignment. Students will build a portfolio of evidence to meet the requirements of the tasks in the set assignments. The tasks are designed to meet all topic areas within the unit content.

Each NEA assessment draws on some of the knowledge and understanding learned in the externally assessed unit and reinforces this learning by allowing students to apply it to practical, real-life situations. The NEA units assess:

- practical skills
- the application of knowledge and understanding.

Set assignments and marking criteria

The practical assignments are set by OCR, marked by the teacher and moderated by OCR. Each assignment provides an estimated time for completion.

The assignments have a short scenario and tasks relating to it. They are written so that students can produce individual evidence. The contexts and associated tasks ask the student to focus on a specific factor and to base their evidence on this factor from the outset. For example:

- in **Child Development**, a student may focus on a child of a specific age in their responses
- in **Health and Social Care**, a student may choose a specific life stage or life event on which to base their responses
- in **Sports** qualifications, a student may choose a specific individual or team sport from the approved list of sports on which to base their responses, in some units
- in **Creative iMedia**, a student may focus on a specific target audience and client requirements in their responses.

This approach means that each student is evidencing their own knowledge, skills and understanding to an individual factor(s), leading to tailored and authentic responses.

The tasks will appear as bulleted lists so that students can easily follow what's needed. We also provide a set of tips or advice for students after each task. The total number of marks for each task will be given at the end of the task.

We provide marking criteria for each task in the specification and the set assignments. The marking criteria consist of three mark bands:

- Mark Band 1
- Mark Band 2
- Mark Band 3

Each mark band represents a number of marks. Teachers/assessors will use the marking criteria to apply a 'best fit' approach to marking. They will select the band descriptor from the marking criteria grid that most closely describes the quality of the work they are marking.

To help with this, we have also developed a set of NEA command words that are used in the marking criteria. Command words have been provided for each mark band and they help to explain the type of evidence that you should expect to see to meet each command word. The command words appear in bold in the marking criteria so that they are easy to identify and cross reference with the meanings.

Examples of NEA marking criteria and command words

IT

Unit R060 Topic Area 1: Planning and designing the spreadsheet solution		
MB1: 1-3 marks	**MB2: 4-6 marks**	**MB3: 7-10 marks**
Limited use of design tools and features used to plan the solution, which are under-utilised for the intended purpose	**Adequate** use of design tools and features used to plan the solution, which are mostly utilised for the intended purpose	**Effective** use of design tools and features used to plan the solution, which are fully utilised for the intended purpose
MB1: 1-4 marks	**MB2: 5-8 marks**	**MB3: 9-13 marks**
Limited functional design of spreadsheet solution	**Adequate** functional design of spreadsheet solution	**Effective** functional design of spreadsheet solution
Limited design of system output(s) produced	**Adequate** design of system output(s) produced	**Effective** design of system outputs produced
Limited design of the Human Computer Interface	**Adequate** design of the Human Computer Interface	**Effective** design of the Human Computer Interface

> The total marks for the tasks are spread across the 3 mark bands.

Engineering Design

Unit R039 Topic Area 1: Manual production of freehand sketches - Design Development		
MB1: 1–4 marks	MB2: 5-8 marks	MB3: 9-12 marks
Produces a **basic** freehand sketch of design proposal.	Produces **adequate** freehand sketches of design proposal.	Produces **comprehensive** freehand sketches of design proposal.
Brief explanation of the key features of a design proposal with **limited** annotation.	**Adequate** explanation of the key features of a design proposal with **some** annotation.	**Detailed** explanation of the key features of a design proposal that is fully annotated.
Limited consideration of the design specification.	**Some** consideration of the design specification.	**Fully** considers the design specification.

> The command words are highlighted in bold.

Examples of marking criteria

Command words

Mark band (MB1) words:

Command word	Meaning
Basic	Work includes the minimum required. It is a starting point but is simplistic and not developed. Understanding and skills are applied in a way that partly achieves the wanted or intended result, but it would not be useable without further input or work.
Brief/Briefly	Work includes a small number of relevant facts or concepts but lacks detail, contextualisation or examples.
Dependent	The student can perform a task when given regular assistance or help.
Few	Work produced is restricted or narrow. It includes less than half of the information or examples expected for a full response.
Inefficient	Outputs are produced but with great expense or effort because of poor organisation or design and not making the best use of available resources.
Limited	Work produced is restricted in range or scope and includes only some of the information required. It evidences partial rather than full understanding. Work produced is a starting point rather than a developed process, concept or output.
Minimal	Includes very little in amount or quantity required.
Simple	Includes a small number of relevant parts, which are not related to each other.
Superficial	Work completed lacks depth and detail.

> **The command words highlighted are appropriate to the specific mark band and their meaning is provided in the command words glossary for that mark band.**

Mark band (MB2) words:

Command word	Meaning
Adequate(ly)	Work includes the appropriate number of relevant facts or concepts but does not include the full detail, contextualisation or examples.
Assisted	The student can perform a task with occasional assistance or help.
Part(ly)/Partial	To some extent but not completely. Work produced is inclusive in range and scope. It evidences a mainly developed application of understanding, performance or output needed. Work produced results in a process, concept or output that would be useable for its purpose.
Some	Work produced is inclusive but not fully comprehensive. It includes over half the information or examples expected for a full response.
Sound	Valid, logical, shows the student has secured most of the relevant understanding, but points or performance are not fully developed. Applies understanding and skills to produce the wanted or intended result in a way that would be useable.

Mark band (MB3) words:

Command word	Meaning
Accurate(ly)	Acting or performing with care and precision. Correct in all details.
All	Work produced is fully comprehensive and wide-ranging. It includes almost all, or all the information or examples expected for a full response.
Clear(ly)	Focused and accurately expressed, without ambiguity.
Complex	Includes many relevant parts, all of which relate to each other logically.
Comprehensive(ly)	The work produced is complete and includes everything required to show depth and breadth of understanding. Applies the understanding and skills needed to successfully produce the wanted or intended result in a way that would be fully fit-for-purpose.
Consistent(ly)	A level of performance which does not vary in quality over time.
Critical	Objective analysis and evaluation in order to form: a judgement, evaluation of the evidence or effective trouble shooting/fault finding.
Detailed	Gives point by point consideration of all the key information.
Effective	Applies the skills required to the task and is successful in producing the desired or intended result. The work produced is effective in relation to a brief.
Efficient	Able to produce results or outputs with the minimum expense or effort, because of good organisation or design and making the best use of available resources.
Full(y)	Work produced is comprehensive in range and scope. It evidences a fully developed application of understanding, performance or output needed. Work produced results in a process, concept or output that would be fully fit-for-purpose.
Independent(ly)	The student can perform a task without assistance or reliance on others.
Justify/Justified	The reasons for doing something are explained in full.
Most(ly)	Includes nearly all of what is expected to be included.
Wide (ranging)	Includes many relevant details, examples or contexts; all of which are fully detailed, contextualised or exemplified.

Summary of what you need to do

Here is a summary of what you need to do as a teacher:

✓ make sure you are familiar with **all** the rules and guidance in Section 6 of the specification **before** your students complete, and you assess, the set assignments. It is very important that you and your students fully adhere to these throughout assessment and marking of the NEA assignments

✓ only use our assignments for summative assessment

✓ give all students a copy of the qualification's Student Guidance before they start working on the assignments

✓ make sure you have covered the relevant knowledge, understanding and skills with your students before you start the summative assessment

✓ make sure you use the correct live assignment for summative assessment. The dates for which assignments can be used are given on the front cover of the assignment. The live assignment for use will always be on Teach Cambridge (our website for teachers)

✓ allow students a reasonable amount of time to complete the assignments and be fair and consistent to all students. The time you allow is be to in line with the estimated time we think it should take and is stated in the 'Teacher Information' section of the assignments. Within the live assessment dates, students can work on the tasks during supervised sessions until you collect the work in for internal assessment

✓ monitor students' progress to make sure work is capable of being assessed against the marking criteria, on track for being completed in good time and is the student's own work.

Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment is a built-in feature of these qualifications. It means that students need to use an appropriate selection of their knowledge, understanding and skills developed across the qualification in an integrated way and apply them to a key task or tasks.

This also helps students to build a holistic understanding of the subject and the connections between different areas of learning, so they can go on to apply what they learn from this qualification to new and different situations and contexts.

The externally assessed unit allows students to gain knowledge and understanding relevant to the subject and the NEA units draw on and strengthen this learning by letting students apply it in a practical, skills-based way.

We give details of the synoptic links for each qualification after each NEA unit in the specification. We've included an example below:

Sport Science

Synoptic assessment

Some of the knowledge, understanding and skills required when completing this unit will draw on the learning developed in Unit R180. The following table details where these synoptic links can be found:

R181: Applying the principles of training: fitness and how it affects skill performance		Unit R180: Reducing the risk of sports injuries and dealing with common medical conditions	
Topic Area		Topic Area	
1	Components of fitness applied in sport	1	Different factors which influence the risk and severity of injury
		5	Causes, symptoms and treatment of medical conditions
3	Organising and planning a fitness training programme	2	Warm up and cool down routines
		3	Different types and causes of sports injuries

More information about synoptic assessment within this qualification can be found in section 5.2 Synoptic assessment.

Transferable skills

These practical qualifications also give students the opportunity to gain broad, transferable skills and experiences that can be applied as they progress into their next stages of study and life. These may also enhance their preparation for future employment.

Students will develop different transferable skills depending on the qualification(s) they take, but here are examples of some of the skills they may develop naturally as a result of completing the NEA assessments:

- Analytical
- Creative thinking
- Digital presentation
- Leadership
- Planning
- Problem solving
- Research
- Team work
- Verbal Communication/Presentation.

The specification for each subject gives more information about the transferable skills developed as a result of completing the qualification. We've included an example of this below:

Creative iMedia

Our Cambridge National in Creative iMedia will encourage students to:

- understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of digital media including factors that influence product design, use of media codes and conventions, pre-production planning techniques, legal issues and creation/publishing/ distribution considerations

- develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations

- think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically

- develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the media industry and more widely

- design, plan, create and review digital media products which are fit for purpose meeting both client and target audience requirements.

For more information visit

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