

Career Information and Advice

Centre Handbook

OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice

Entry code 04512

Issued June 2019

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1 Introduction

OCR entry code	Title	Qualification Number
04512	OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice	600/0805/2

The information provided in this handbook is correct at the time of production. Occasionally we may update it so please check the qualification [webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information.

This handbook contains what you need to know about the planning, delivery and assessment of this qualification. Staff involved in the delivery of this qualification must have access to and understand the requirements in this handbook.

For information on how to administer this qualification, please follow the link to OCR's Administration area, www.ocr.org.uk/administration/

You will find all the details about how the qualifications run, what you need to do and when. It covers everything from becoming an OCR centre, to making entries, claiming certificates, special arrangements and contacting us for advice.

You should ensure candidates are informed of the title and level of the qualification they have been entered for and that Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) is the awarding body for their chosen qualification.

1.1 The OCR Career Information and Advice qualification

The OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice provides candidates with a high quality, nationally recognised qualification. It is a vocationally-related, credit-based qualification that relates to national occupational standards (NOS) and provides valuable opportunities for individuals to develop skills gain underpinning knowledge and understanding and demonstrate competence in the workplace or provide continued professional development.

2 General information

2.1 Qualification summary

Title	OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice			
OCR entry code	04512			
Qualification number (QN)	600/0805/2			
Level	Level 4			
Qualification structure	<p>The credit required for this qualification is 45 credits.</p> <p>To achieve this qualification, candidates must complete a total of 45 credits, 30 credits from 5 mandatory units and 15 credits from 18 optional units.</p>			
Age group approved	Pre-16	16-18	18+	19+
			✓	✓
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	450	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)		280
This qualification is suitable for candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> studying in preparation for employment in the career guidance sector employed in the career guidance sector who are wishing to undertake professional development wishing to gain a Level 4 qualification to support further study in Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) in the career guidance sector 			
Entry requirements	There are no formal entry requirements for this qualification.			
Assessment	<p>This qualification is pass/fail.</p> <p>This qualification is internally assessed by centre staff and externally verified by OCR Assessors.</p>			
Last date to enter candidates	<p>This is the operational end date for the qualification.</p> <p>If we are going to withdraw the qualification we will set an end date for entries and certification and we'll tell you what the arrangements are for the last date to enter candidates and make claims for certificates.</p>			

2.2 Target market

The OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice has been specifically designed for those working in para-professional roles providing career information and advice to clients.

2.3 Qualification aims

This qualification aims to provide regulated professional development opportunities for those currently working in within the career guidance sector, or those preparing to enter such roles, and to encourage progression within the sector.

The qualification has a core of mandatory units which will be applicable to all staff, and a wide range of optional units to allow specialisation as appropriate.

This qualification may also form a progression route to the OCR Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development or other appropriate higher education qualifications.

2.4 Entry requirements

There are no formal requirements for entry to this qualification.

This qualification is regulated for learners aged 18 years and over.

This qualification is available to anyone who is capable of reaching the required standards and meeting the assessment criteria for the units though the particular setting in which they practice. It has been developed free from any barriers that restrict access or progression thereby promoting equal opportunities.

All staff involved in the assessment or delivery of this qualifications should understand the requirements of the qualification and match them to the needs and capabilities of individual candidates before entering them as candidates for this qualification.

2.5 Unique Learner Number (ULN)

This is a personal ten-digit number, which is used to ensure learner achievement information can be provided to their Personal Learning Record (PLR). ULNs are provided and administered by the Learning Records Service (LRS).

Learners over the age of 14 in UK education or training can access the PLR using their ULN. Learners keep the same ULN to access their PLR throughout their lives and whatever their level of learning.

Candidates that claim certification for publically funded qualifications must have a valid ULN.

Where a learner has a ULN, you must enter their ten digit number in the ULN field when making entries via Interchange. For learners who do not have a ULN, a claim will still be accepted if you leave this field blank, but OCR will not be able to send these achievements to the PLR.

For more information, and to generate a ULN, please refer to the [Learning Records Service](#).

2.6 Progression opportunities

This qualification has been designed to encourage progression to the OCR Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development. It may also be used as part of continuous professional development for those currently working in the careers guidance sector.

2.7 Wider issues

This qualification provides potential for centres to develop candidates' understanding of spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues and heighten candidates' awareness of environmental issues, health and safety considerations and European developments.

Spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues

Centre staff delivering a course that supports this qualification would have opportunities to address spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues. For example, in Unit 1, candidates will explore issues of social responsibility, courtesy and protocols when dealing with colleagues and clients. In Units 3 and 9 candidates will need to understand issues such as responsibility towards clients. Unit 6 will give candidates the opportunity to consider ethical, social and cultural implications when planning and delivering learning in groups. In Unit 12, candidates will need to consider the ethical considerations when dealing with a wide range of people who may be able to support their clients. Unit 13 requires appreciation of correct protocols when preparing CVs and applications, and gives scope to explore issues of security and confidentiality of information. In Unit 19, candidates will have to consider the moral issues surrounding their use of advocacy skills on behalf of clients.

Environmental issues, health and safety considerations and European developments

Centre staff delivering a course that supports this qualification may have opportunities to address environmental issues, health and safety considerations and European developments depending on the method of delivery/choice of teaching materials.

There is scope within many of the units for candidates to consider environment and sustainability issues when providing information and guidance to clients about their options. Candidates might consider not only the nature of the work or training itself, but the organisation providing that employment or training, its location and long term future. There might be additional issues such as the client's travel arrangements, or working patterns. Unit 6 will require candidates to consider health and safety implications when planning group learning and Unit 20 includes coverage of risk assessment when undertaking outreach work. Unit 11 will include evaluation of international labour markets, and additionally, candidates may be able to explore the European dimension as part of their research work for Unit 18.

2.8 Qualification size

The size of the qualification is described in terms of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and Total Qualification Time (TQT).

GLH indicates the approximate time (in hours) that the learner will be supervised during any teaching, learning or assessment activities. We have worked with people who are experienced in delivering this qualification to determine what content needs to be taught and how long it will take to deliver.

TQT is comprised of two elements: GLH, and an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably spend on any unsupervised learning or assessment activities (including homework) so they can successfully achieve their qualification.

OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice requires a minimum 280 GLH. Total Qualification Time (TQT) is 450.

2.9 Funding

Funding arrangements can be subject to change. For the latest details about approval and funding eligibility, we recommend you visit the following websites:

[Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) – Ofqual's register of regulated qualifications

Department for Education (DfE) [Section 96](#) – for confirmation of the approval of qualifications to be delivered to specific age ranges

[Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) for funding education and training for children, young people and adults in England

[Department for the Economy](#) for public funding in Northern Ireland

[Qualifications in Wales](#) database (QiW) for public funding in Wales

Some qualifications may be eligible for a loan. For more information about Advanced learner loans see the [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#).

You should use the Qualification Number (QN) when you are looking for information on qualification eligibility for public funding.

If you have any queries about funding for this qualification email us at funding@ocr.org.uk.

2.10 Mode of delivery

OCR does not specify the mode of study or a time limit for the achievement of this qualification other than the last entry/last certification dates. If we are going to withdraw a qualification we will set an end date for entries and certification and we will tell you what the arrangements are for the last date to enter learners and make claims for certificates.

Centres are free to deliver this qualification using any mode of delivery that meets the needs of their candidates. Whatever mode of delivery is used, centres must ensure that candidates have appropriate access to the resources identified below.

Centres should consider the candidates' complete learning experience when designing learning programmes. This is particularly important in relation to candidates studying part time alongside real work commitments where candidates may bring with them a wealth of experience that should be utilised to maximum effect by centre staff.

2.11 Resources

OCR strongly advises that teaching and development of subject content and associated skills be referenced to real vocational situations, through the utilisation of appropriate work-based contact, vocationally experienced delivery personnel, and real life case studies.

Candidates should be encouraged to read around the subject and have an appropriate knowledge of the application of the appropriate legislation (e.g. Health and Safety).

Staff conducting assessment must understand fully the requirements of this qualification. Centres should ensure that appropriate physical resources are made available to candidates.

Centres will need to meet the above requirements when they seek centre approval from OCR.

2.12 Delivery in Wales and Northern Ireland

Candidates in Wales and Northern Ireland should not be disadvantaged by terms, legislation or aspects of government that are different from those in England. Where such situations might occur, we have used neutral terms so candidates may apply whatever is appropriate to their own situation.

We will provide handbooks and supporting documentation in English. Only answers provided in English will be assessed.

2.13 Accessibility

There can be adjustments to standard assessment arrangements on the basis of the individual needs of candidates.

It is important, therefore, that centres identify as early as possible whether candidates have disabilities or particular difficulties that will put them at a disadvantage in the assessment situation and select an appropriate qualification or adjustment that will allow them to demonstrate attainment.

The responsibility for providing adjustments to assessment is shared between the centre and OCR. Please read the JCQ booklet *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* at www.jcq.org.uk/.

For further guidance on access arrangements and special consideration refer to the Administration area of the [OCR website](#).

If the tutor/assessor thinks any aspect of this qualification unfairly restricts access and progression, please email or call the OCR Customer Support Centre.

2.14 Reporting suspected malpractice

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre¹ to report all cases of suspected malpractice involving centre staff or candidates. A JCQ Report of Suspected Malpractice form (JCQ/M1 for candidate suspected malpractice or JCQ/M2a for staff suspected malpractice) is available to download from the [JCQ website](#) and should be completed as soon as possible and emailed to malpractice@ocr.org.uk.

When asked to do so by OCR, Heads of Centres are required to investigate instances of malpractice promptly and report the outcomes to OCR.

Further information regarding reporting and investigating suspected malpractice and the possible sanctions and penalties which could be imposed, is contained in the JCQ publication: *General and Vocational Qualifications – Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*; this is available from the [JCQ website](#). Centres may also like to refer to the [OCR Website](#) for more details.

¹ This is the most senior officer in the organisation, directly responsible for the delivery of OCR qualifications, e.g. the Head Teacher or Principal of a school/college. The Head of Centre accepts full responsibility for the correct administration and conduct of OCR exams

3 Assessment

3.1 Assessment: How it works

This qualification is internally assessed by centre assessors and quality assured by internal quality assurance personnel and externally verified by OCR.

In order for candidates to be able to achieve each of the learning outcomes, tutors must ensure that the requirements for the underlying assessment criteria are fully addressed. The development of the candidate's knowledge, understanding and skills may be tailored to particular contexts to which the unit is being taught and the assessment criteria applied.

We recommend that teaching and development of subject content and associated skills be referenced to real life situations, through the utilisation of appropriate work-based contact, vocationally experienced delivery personnel, and real life case situations.

When assessors are satisfied that the candidate has met all of the requirements for a unit, they must confirm this by signing an evidence record sheet for that unit to show that the assessment process is complete.

If a candidate fails the assessment for a unit, they may be entered again. There is no restriction, other than the life of the qualification, on the number of times a candidate may enter for a unit/examination. Unit fees are available for this purpose. The OCR Fees List provides details of all fees applicable to these units/qualification.

Assessment and the Data Protection Act

Centre assessors, who are responsible for assessing candidates' evidence for internally assessed units, must make sure that candidates know they must comply with the Data Protection Act when they are producing work for assessment. Candidates must not reference another individual's personal details in any evidence produced for assessment. It is the candidate's responsibility to make sure evidence that includes another individual's personal details is anonymised.

Initial assessment of candidates

It is important for centres to carry out some form of initial assessment that identifies what competence and knowledge a candidate already has and the gaps that they need to look at. This will help plan the assessment because it allows assessors to help candidates understand the best place to start collecting evidence. It will also identify units which candidates might have difficulty finishing.

See section 2.4 for information about entry requirements and prior learning and section 3.2 for Recognition of Prior Learning.

3.2 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is the process for recognising learning that never received formal recognition through a qualification or certification. This includes knowledge and skills gained in school, college or university and outside formal learning situations. Evidence can draw on any aspect of a candidate's prior experience including:

- domestic/family life
- education
- training
- work activities
- voluntary activities.

We encourage the use of RPL and your centre should advise learners that they can bring forward any relevant learning (gained either informally or formally) so that it can be assessed against the assessment criteria specified in the unit, or units, the learner aims to complete. It is important that your centre make it clear to learners that the RPL process is concerned with how the learner has acquired the knowledge, understanding or skills, it does not mean the learner is exempt from the assessment e.g. mandatory exams, practical/theory tests or assignments.

The currency of knowledge and ability is often important when recognising skills and competences. Where assessment is devolved to centres through assignments or portfolio-building, centre staff must judge the relevance of prior learning in all its aspects (including currency) to the qualification being assessed, before we will quality assure and authorise certification.

Evidence obtained through the RPL process must be assessed, to the same rigorous quality as evidence obtained through any other process.

3.3 Assessment planning

Assessors must take responsibility for assessment planning with candidates. This will involve agreeing a number of issues with candidates including:

- finding the best source of evidence to use for particular units
- finding the best way of assessing the candidate
- confirming the best times, dates and places for the assessments to take place.

Guidance is given on each unit regarding the recommended forms of assessment which are most appropriate for that unit. Utilising a wide range of evidence formats across units should help to ensure the candidate's overall portfolio is robust.

Assessors must make a note of their assessment planning and regularly give feedback to candidates.

3.4 Making assessment decisions

It is not necessary for candidates to meet all the criteria every time they carry out an activity but **it is necessary that all candidates produce their own evidence to meet all assessment criteria.** They must consistently provide enough evidence for assessors to believe that the candidate is competent in their working environment.

In line with the Learning and Development standard A1, assessors should:

- plan with the candidates
- assess candidate performance, knowledge and understanding
- look at the evidence
- question and give feedback to the candidate working towards this qualification.

They should also be satisfied that the candidate has demonstrated competence when meeting the assessment criteria.

All criteria must be completed before the assessor can sign the unit off as complete.

For information on how to administer this qualification please follow the link to OCR's Administration area, www.ocr.org.uk/administration/.

3.5 Methods of assessment

It is the assessor's responsibility to agree the best method of assessing a candidate in relation to their individual circumstances. The methods agreed must be:

- valid
- reliable
- safe and manageable
- suitable to the needs of the candidate.

Valid

A valid assessment method is one that is capable of measuring the knowledge or skills in question. For example, a written test cannot measure a candidate's practical skills or their ability to work well with others.

Validity can also be compromised if a candidate does not understand what is required of them. For example, one valid method of assessing a candidate's knowledge and understanding is to question them. If the questions posed are difficult for the candidate to understand (not in terms of the content but the way they are phrased, for example), the validity of the assessment method is questionable.

As well as assessment methods being valid, the evidence presented must also be valid. For example it would not be appropriate for the candidate to present the organisation's staff handbook to demonstrate Unit 1 Learning outcome 4, regarding legislation and codes of practice. It would be more appropriate for the candidate and assessor to have a discussion about what legislation and codes of practice apply to the organisation and how the candidate knows that he/she is working in accordance with these.

Reliable

A reliable method of assessment will produce consistent results for different assessors on each assessment occasion. Internal verifiers must make sure that all assessors' decisions are consistent.

Safe and manageable

Assessors and internal verifiers must make sure that the assessment methods are safe and manageable and do not put unnecessary demands on the candidate and/or the organisation they work for.

Suitable to the needs of the candidate

OCR has tried to make sure that achievement of this qualification is free from constraints outside the requirements of the candidate's job role.

For candidates who have access requirements please see section 2.13 of this handbook.

If centre staff think that any aspect of this qualification unfairly restricts access and progression, they should talk to their OCR external verifier about this.

OCR in partnership with the LLUK and other awarding bodies has identified the following main assessment methods which are suitable for this qualification:

- **examination of the evidence** by an assessor
- **direct observation** of practice in the workplace by a qualified assessor
- **questioning** the candidate or witness by an assessor

- **professional discussion** where the candidate discusses with the assessor how their evidence meets the assessment criteria and the discussion is recorded as part of the evidence.
- **witness testimonies** from an expert witness in the sector
- **personal statements or candidate's reflective diary or account** on their performance, or candidate's reflection on the application of theories in practice
- **performance evidence** including products or outcomes of the candidate's work.

In some situations, the assessor can speak to the candidate to provide evidence of the candidate's performance and knowledge (see [Professional discussion](#)).

3.6 Examining the evidence

Only approved and qualified assessors (see [Assessor and internal verifier requirements](#)) may examine the evidence for the assessment of this qualification.

Evidence can:

- reflect how the candidate carried out the process
- be the product of a candidate's work
- be a product relating to the candidate's competence.

For example:

The process that the candidate carries out could be recorded in an observation or witness testimony. It is the assessor's responsibility to make sure that the evidence a candidate submits for assessment meets the requirements of the qualification.

The product of a candidate's work could be a case study, an assignment, essay, project, report or reflective diary.

In some cases, it may be inappropriate for a specific part of the evidence to be presented directly within the portfolio (e.g. in situations where client confidentiality is an issue). In such circumstances, it is acceptable to signpost the evidence within the portfolio. Candidates must not reference another individual's personal details in any evidence produced for summative assessment. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that any evidence which includes another individual's personal details is anonymised to comply with the Data Protection Act.

After the assessor has examined the evidence, the assessor must record an assessment decision and the justification for the decision. The assessor should also give feedback to the candidate.

3.7 Observation

Only approved and qualified assessors (see [Assessor and internal verifier requirements](#)) may carry out observations for the assessment of this qualification.

The assessor and candidate should plan observations together but it is the assessor's responsibility to record the observation properly.

After the observation has taken place, the assessor needs to record an assessment decision and the justification for the decision. The assessor should also give feedback to the candidate.

Whilst observation is not necessarily appropriate or required for every unit, some observation of the candidate's performance is mandatory across the qualification. Where observation may create a barrier for a specific candidate, individual cases should be referred to OCR.

3.8 Questioning

Only approved and qualified assessors (see [Assessor and internal verifier requirements](#)) may question a candidate or witness for the assessment of this qualification.

Questioning the candidate is normally an ongoing part of the assessment process, and is necessary to:

- test a candidate's knowledge of facts and procedures
- check if a candidate understands principles and theories *and*
- collect information on the type and purpose of the processes a candidate has gone through.

Assessors should ask open questions; that is questions where the candidate has to give a full answer, not simply 'yes' or 'no'. Assessors should also be careful to avoid complicated questions which may confuse the candidate.

It is important that assessors record assessment decisions after they have questioned the candidate. They must record enough information to justify the decisions they make. This does not mean that assessors must record, word for word, the questions put to the candidate and the answers the candidate gives. However, assessors must record enough information about what they asked and how the candidate replied to allow the assessment to be verified.

Questioning witnesses is normally an ongoing part of validating written witness statements. However, questioning witnesses should not just be used for this purpose. Assessors should be able to speak to witnesses and record, in whatever way is suitable, the verbal statements of these witnesses. A record of verbal statement is a form of witness statement and could provide valuable evidence to confirm a candidate's competence over a period of time.

3.9 Professional discussion

Professional discussion is a structured, planned and in depth discussion recorded by the assessor. It allows the candidate to present evidence of competence and to demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding through discussing the evidence and showing how it meets the requirements of the qualification. The assessor should guide the discussion by using open questioning, active listening and knowledge of the standards.

3.10 Witness testimonies

Witness testimonies can be used as evidence of a candidate's performance. Such testimonies could be made verbally to the assessor or could be written in a short note.

If a witness provides a written statement they should include the following:

- the candidate's name
- the date, time and venue of the activity carried out
- a description of the activities performed by the candidate
- the date of writing the testimony
- a description of the witness' relationship to the candidate
- their signature and job title
- their contact details (such as telephone number).

It is not appropriate for witness testimonies to contain a list of the skills to which it relates. Witnesses must direct the information in their testimonies to describing what the candidate did. The assessor will then judge whether the candidate's activities demonstrate competence to the standards. It is not acceptable for candidates to produce written witness testimonies for witnesses to sign, to support a qualification they are working towards.

3.11 Personal statements

This is a candidate's own account of what they did, backed up by reference to evidence or witnesses. Candidates can also produce logs or diaries, reflective accounts, but someone who can authenticate them as a true account of what took place must countersign these.

3.12 Performance evidence

Performance evidence provides proof of what a candidate can do. Sometimes, performance evidence can also provide evidence of what a candidate knows. Performance evidence can take the form of the following:

- products or outcomes of the candidate's work (for example, things that the candidate produced or worked on). The evidence presented for assessment may be the actual product or a record of the product
- if group work is used as evidence, the candidate's contribution must be identified clearly. Other products (for example, company policies) may have been reproduced by someone else but relate to the candidate and their competence
- proof of the way the candidate carried out their work (that is, the process they went through). An assessor's observation of a candidate or a witness' testimony both provides performance evidence and would be suitable for this qualification.

3.13 Where evidence comes from

Evidence may come from a number of different sources, for example:

- performance evidence may come from a candidate carrying out workplace activities
- knowledge evidence may come from a candidate carrying out workplace activities or from the candidate answering the assessor's questions.

3.14 Real work

The qualification requires that all assessment of a candidate's performance must take place within the workplace, and that observation should be of naturally occurring practice within the candidate's work role. This will include the demonstration of the application of knowledge. This principle will apply to all units.

3.15 Simulation

Simulation is not allowed. However, where access to assessment is jeopardised by this, guidance should be sought from OCR who will make a decision on the issue.

3.16 Type of evidence

Evidence can take many forms, for example, written work, audio/visual recordings, digitally formatted documents, a product or photographs (of a product).

3.17 Amount of evidence needed

It is difficult to give detailed guidance regarding the amount of evidence needed as it depends on the type of evidence collected and the judgement of assessors.

For a candidate to be judged competent in a unit, the evidence presented must satisfy all the assessment requirements and assessment criteria.

The quality and breadth of evidence provided should determine whether an assessor is confident that a candidate is competent or not. Assessors must be convinced that candidates working on their own can work independently to the required standard.

3.18 Recording Evidence

As well as collecting evidence, candidates must record all their assessed evidence using:

- Evidence Recording Sheets (which show, per unit, the assessment criteria and the evidence which has been collected to meet them)
- Evidence Log (which lists all the candidate's evidence and assigns a reference to each piece)
- Record of Achievement (which shows the units the candidate has completed and which have been signed off by the assessor)

The combination of these three forms provides the candidate's record of what evidence has been accepted as proof of competence and where that evidence can be found, as well as recording progress towards, and achievement of units.

Completing the forms is an ongoing process involving discussion and agreement between the candidate and their assessor. The candidate should fill in and keep the forms while working towards their qualification, though an assessor may help the candidate complete them if necessary.

OCR provides forms specifically designed for this qualification, but centres can design their own recording documents if they prefer. You should talk about any document you want to use with your external verifier before you use them. OCR's Administration area www.ocr.org.uk/administration/ includes information and criteria for designing recording documents.

The OCR forms and recording documents which assessors and candidates might want to use for this qualification can be found on our [website](#).

3.19 Verification – how it works

Internal verification

It is the centre's responsibility to appoint an internal verifier to manage the internal verification process. The purpose of internal verification is to make sure and show that assessment is valid and consistent, through monitoring and sampling assessment decisions.

The role of the internal verifier is more fully explained in the Administration area on the website, www.ocr.org.uk/administration/.

External verification

OCR will allocate an external verifier who will visit the centre to verify assessments and internal verification.

External verifiers will want to interview candidates, assessors and internal verifiers during their visits. Assessment records and evidence for all candidates must also be available for verifiers to see if they ask to. It is the assessor's (and not the internal or external verifiers') responsibility to 'sign off' each unit of competence.

Centres should have the following available for each external verification visit:

- a list of candidates registered for this qualification, together with their achievements to date plus certification records
- access to evidence (for example, up-to-date portfolios) and CARs
- access to OCR on-line claim system (Interchange)
- relevant assessors and selected candidates as requested by the external verifier (EV), including those whose certificates have been claimed through Direct Claims Status (DCS)
- all portfolios (access to evidence) relating to certificates claimed through DCS
- a copy of the external verifier's last visit report
- a sample signature list for all assessors and internal verifiers
- details of training and curriculum vitae for new members of the assessment team
- all **centre records** (see **Centre records – assessment and verification** for more details)
- evidence of achieving action points since the last external verifier visit
- notes of any action carried out due to particular points mentioned by an external verifier in any correspondence since their last visit
- recommendations to the external verifier
- if recorded evidence is used, ensure all recordings and appropriate playback equipment is available.

Centre records – assessment and verification

A centre must make sure that assessment and verification records are available for external verification purposes. Assessment and/or internal verification records must record the following minimum information:

- candidate's name and location
- the title and level of the qualification they are taking
- candidate's start date on the programme and confirmation of registration with OCR
- name of the assessor
- name of the internal verifier
- date and outcome of the initial assessment of the candidate
- dates and details of candidate reviews and feedback sessions
- dates of all assessments and their outcomes (that is, the decision whether the candidate has met the requirements or not) cross-referenced to the unit
- enough detail of the assessment to justify the decision made
- an indication of the use of simulation, if used
- dates and outcomes of internal verification
- action resulting from internal verification
- certification.

Records should show formative assessment decisions (ongoing decision making), summative assessment decisions and feedback to the candidate.

4 Assessor and Internal Verifier Requirements

4.1 Assessment Centre Requirements

The Assessment Centre must:

- Ensure that there are a sufficient number of people either trained or qualified to assess the number of candidates they anticipate to register
- Ensure that there are a sufficient number of people either trained or qualified to internally verify for the number of candidates and assessors
- Put verification systems and internal verifiers in place to ensure that all assessments are valid, reliable, authentic and sufficient and provide quality assured training for those people identified as being responsible for verification
- Ensure that there is a system of standardisation in place to ensure that all assessments are consistent and fair
- Ensure that those undertaking the roles of verification and assessment maintain their skills, knowledge and understanding regarding assessment and verification and the associated qualification.

The occupational expertise of those undertaking the roles of assessment and internal verification is one of the key factors underpinning valid, fair and reliable assessment. The integrity of assessments and verifications is of paramount importance. Centres must ensure that there is sufficient time to conduct effective assessment and internal verification.

Authentication

Tutors/Assessors must be confident that the work they mark is the candidate's own. This does not mean that a candidate must be supervised throughout the completion of all work but the tutor/assessor must exercise sufficient supervision, or introduce sufficient checks, to be in a position to judge the authenticity of the candidate's work.

Wherever possible, the tutor/assessor should discuss work-in-progress with candidates. This will not only ensure that work is underway in a planned and timely manner but will also provide opportunities for tutors/assessors to check authenticity of the work and provide general feedback.

Where permitted by the specification, the work of individual candidates may be informed by working with others, for example, in undertaking research, but candidates must provide an individual response as part of any task outcome.

Plagiarism

Candidates must not plagiarise. Plagiarism is the submission of another's work as one's own and/or failure to acknowledge the source correctly. Plagiarism is considered to be malpractice and could lead to the candidate being disqualified. Plagiarism sometimes occurs innocently when candidates are unaware of the need to reference or acknowledge their sources. It is therefore important that centres ensure that candidates understand that work they submit must be their own and that they understand the meaning of plagiarism and what penalties may be applied. Candidates may refer to research, quotations or evidence but they must list their sources.

Resubmitting work for assessment

If the tutor/assessor and the candidate feel they have not performed at their best during the assessment, the candidate can, at the tutor/assessor's discretion, improve their work and resubmit it for assessment. The tutor/assessor must ensure it is in the candidate's interests to reattempt the assessment.

Whilst there are no restrictions on the number of times that a candidate can resubmit evidence, it is the responsibility of the tutor/assessor to ensure that the details of any feedback and guidance are clearly recorded. Any advice to individual candidates over and above that given to the class as a whole should be recorded.

Centres must not encourage multiple resubmissions of work. Resubmission at the centre assessment stage is intended to allow the candidate to reflect on feedback and improve, but not to be an iterative process where they make small modifications through ongoing feedback to eventually achieve the desired level.

4.2 Assessors

Assessment is an activity that can be performed by a dedicated individual or as part of an individual's wider role e.g. Supervisor, manager, tutor. All assessors must:

- be qualified as an assessor (A1). Assessor training authorised and monitored by OCR (although not necessarily leading to A1) would also be acceptable. Where Centres use trained assessors they must provide evidence to OCR of the training undertaken
- have the role of assessor identified within their role profile, where assessment forms part of an individual's role
- be occupationally competent in the unit they are assessing. This means that each assessor must, according to current sector practice, be competent in the functions covered by the units they are assessing. They will have gained their occupational competence working within an appropriate occupational sector. They are not required to occupy a position in the organisation more senior than that of the candidate they are assessing. Centres must be alert to the risks that all such arrangements could present and ensure that sufficient quality controls are in place through the internal verification process to minimise the possibility of collusion between candidates and assessors. Assessors must be able to demonstrate consistent application of the skills and the current supporting knowledge and understanding in the context of a recent role directly related to the units they are assessing as a practitioner, trainer or manager

- be familiar with the units that relate to the qualification and must be able to interpret and make judgements on current working practices and technologies within the area of work
- maintain their occupational competence by either actively engaging in continuous professional development activities or by performing the operational role as part of their regular responsibilities in order to keep up to date with developments relating to the sector.

4.3 Internal verifiers

Internal Verification is an activity that can be performed by a dedicated individual or as part of an individual's wider role. All Internal verifiers must:

- be either qualified as a verifier (V1) or have been trained to perform the function of verification. V1 training authorised and monitored by OCR (although not necessarily leading to V1) is also acceptable. Where Centres use trained verifiers, they must provide evidence of the training undertaken to OCR
- be occupationally knowledgeable across the range of units for which they are responsible prior to commencing the role. Due to the risk critical nature of the work and the legal implications of the assessment process, internal verifiers must understand the nature and context of the assessors' work and that of their candidates. IVs must also sample the assessment process and resolve differences and conflicts on assessment decisions.
- ensure that assessment has been carried out by persons who are occupationally competent within the area they are assessing.
- maintain their occupational knowledge by actively engaging in continuous professional development activities in order to keep up-to-date with developments relating to the sector.
- have an appropriate induction to qualifications and the standards that they are verifying provided to them by the Centre, and have access to ongoing training and updating on current issues relevant to this qualification. Information on the induction and continuing professional development of internal verifiers must be made available to the external verifier.

5 Certification

Candidates who achieve the full qualification will receive:

- a certificate listing the unit or units achieved with their related credit value, and
- a certificate giving the full qualification title

OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice

Candidates achieving one or more units but who do not meet the credit requirements for a full qualification will receive a certificate listing the units they have achieved along with their credit value.

5.1 Claiming certificates

Certificates will be issued directly to your centre for successful candidates. In order to ensure that these are automatically issued, you must ensure that the OCR candidate number is **always** used where a candidate has already achieved one or more units.

For more details refer to the Administration area, certificates, www.ocr.org.uk/administration.

5.2 Enquiries about results

Under certain circumstances, centres may wish to query the result(s) issued to one or more candidates.

To find out more about this, please refer to the JCQ *Post-Results Services* booklet and the Administration area, post results services.

5.3 Replacement certificates

For details on replacement certificates refer to the Administration area, certificates.

6 Qualification structure and units

6.1 Qualification structure

The qualification has been designed with logical progression within the mandatory units. Whilst candidates do not have to *achieve* the units in any particular order, it is strongly advised that the mandatory units 1-5 are studied in sequence, especially for those new to their role, and tutors should tailor learning programmes to meet individual candidate needs. It is recommended that, wherever possible, centres adopt a holistic approach to the delivery of the qualification (in particular Units 3-5) and identify opportunities to link the units.

OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice

(Qualification Number 600/0805/2)

To achieve this qualification, candidates must achieve a total of 45 credits made up as follows:

- 30 credits from the 5 mandatory units in Group A
- A minimum of 15 credits from the optional units in Group B

The following tables contain the groups of mandatory and optional units.

Group A

OCR Unit No	Unit title	Unit Reference No (URN)	Credit value	Level	GLH
1	Preparing to work in the career information, advice and guidance sector	A/502/8432	6	4	40
2	Reflecting on practice and continuous professional development	D/502/8438	6	4	40
3	Interview clients to determine their need for career information, advice and guidance	J/502/8417	6	4	40
4	Meeting the career-related information needs of clients	L/502/8418	6	4	40
5	Career choice theories and concepts to support clients	A/502/8401	6	4	20

Group B

OCR Unit No	Unit title	Unit Reference No (URN)	Credit value	Level	GLH
6	Plan and deliver career-related learning in groups	A/502/8429	6	4	40
7	Assist clients to review the achievement of career-related actions	H/502/8425	2	4	15
8	Provide ongoing support to clients	R/502/8436	2	4	15
9	Use diagnostic and assessment tools with clients	A/502/8446	6	5	40
10	Explore and agree how to meet the career-related needs of clients	T/502/8414	6	4	40
11	Source, evaluate and use Labour Market Information with clients	Y/502/8440	3	4	20
12	Engage with support networks to help clients to meet their career-related needs	L/502/8404	3	4	20
13	Assist clients to apply for learning, training and work	Y/502/8423	3	4	20
14	Negotiate on behalf of clients	T/502/8445	4	5	30
15	Understand how to support specific client groups to overcome barriers to learning, training and work	D/502/8441	3	4	20
16	Obtain and organise career-related information to support clients	J/502/8420	3	4	20
17	Refer clients to sources of specialist support to meet their needs	Y/502/8437	2	4	15
18	Undertake research on behalf of the service	J/502/8434	6	6	40
19	Advocate on behalf of clients	H/502/8442	4	6	40
20	Prepare to deliver services to clients in an outreach setting	M/502/8430	2	4	15
21	Promote career-related learning to clients	F/502/8433	6	4	40
22	Operate within networks to support the delivery of the service	D/502/8407	2	3	20
23	Evaluate service provision	H/502/8408	3	4	20

Units can be downloaded from the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk/.

7 Supporting Documentation

7.1 OCR assessment material

The OCR assessment materials for OCR Level 4 Diploma in Career Information and Advice include candidate record sheets, guidance and assessment records. Assessment materials are available to download from the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk.

Record of achievement

For use by candidates to record progress through their chosen units.

Evidence log

For use by candidates to record a description of each piece of evidence, and assign it a reference which can then be used in the Evidence Record Sheet

Evidence record sheet

For use by candidates and assessors to show where evidence meets the performance criteria, and to confirm that the evidence provided is a result of the candidate's own work.

7.2 Other supporting material – Guidance for candidates

Written specifically for candidates, this booklet includes information on the structure of the qualification along with guidance on unit selection and the types of evidence which will be required in order to complete the qualification.

7.3 Professional development

As part of our teacher training we offer a broad range of courses. We are constantly looking for ways to improve the support we offer you and to make our professional development programme more accessible and convenient to all.

To find out more about professional development, please visit our website.

7.4 Useful documents and links

OCR	OCR's Administration area www.ocr.org.uk/administration/ What is malpractice?
JCQ	Publications at www.jcq.org.uk/ <i>Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments</i> <i>Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments</i>
Ofqual	www.gov.uk/guidance/ register.ofqual.gov.uk/
QiW	www.qiw.wales/
CCEA	ccea.org.uk/

8 Contacting us

8.1 Feedback and enquiries

We aim to provide consistently great customer service and your feedback is invaluable in helping us to achieve our goal. For questions about our qualifications, products and services, please contact the [Customer Support Centre](#). To leave your feedback on the OCR website, people and processes please use our [feedback form](#).

Write to: Customer Support Centre
OCR
Progress House
Westwood Way
Coventry
CV4 8JQ

Telephone: 024 76 851509
Email: vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

Alternatively, you could visit OCR's website at www.ocr.org.uk for further information about OCR qualifications.

8.2 Complaints

We are committed to providing a high quality service but understand that sometimes things can go wrong. We welcome your comments and want to resolve your complaint as efficiently as possible. To make a complaint please follow the process set out on our [website](#).

9 Glossary

Analyse	Examine in very close detail: identify important points and chief features
Critically analyse	Consider the claims of theorists, governments, authorities etc, what they are based on and how far they seem to apply to a given situation
Critically evaluate	Outline the criteria used to guide your assessment of which theories, opinions, models or items are preferable and then weigh arguments for and against something, assessing the strength of the evidence on both sides.
Critique	Use evidence to examine the strengths and weaknesses of
Evaluate	Assess the worth, importance or usefulness of something, using evidence
On-going support	Support clients on an ongoing basis to help them to progress their plan of action This could be where the client is working directly with you or where a particular aspect of their case has been referred to another service.
Referral	Determining a more detailed picture of the needs of the client and then obtaining a booked appointment for the client with another agency, where the referring agency for reasons of specialism or capacity is unable to assist the client further
Signposting	Where a client is simply directed to one or more appropriate sources of information, advice or guidance. An example of this would be giving the client telephone numbers of local agencies

10 Key updates to this handbook

Section	Title of section and change	Version and date issued
2.8 8 All sections	Qualification size updated Contacting us updated Hyperlinks updated.	June 2019
All sections	Amended reference to the Admin Guide to the new Administration area on the OCR website and removed the section on administration arrangements. References to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) have been removed. Updated contact information in the event of any queries concerning the units or assessment.	September 2017
2	The following information has been updated: 2.5 Unique Learner Numbers and the Personal Learning Record 2.9 Funding 2.12 Delivery in Wales and Northern Ireland 2.13 Access arrangements and special consideration 2.14 Reporting suspected malpractice	
3	3.1 Information added about data protection 3.6 Information added about data protection 3.2 Recognition of prior learning	
4	4.1 Resubmitting work for assessment	
8	Contacting us - information updated	
	Administration arrangements – section deleted	

www.ocr.org.uk

OCR Customer Support Centre

Vocational qualifications

Telephone 02476 851509

Facsimile 02476 851633

Email vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

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