

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 3 (2016)

Moderators' report

IT



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Introduction

Our Moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on centres' assessment of moderated work, based on what has been observed by our moderation team. These reports include a general commentary of accuracy of internal assessment judgements; identify good practice in relation to evidence collation and presentation and comments on the quality of centre assessment decisions against individual Learning Outcomes. This report also highlights areas where requirements have been misinterpreted and provides guidance to centre assessors on requirements for accessing higher mark bands. Where appropriate, the report will also signpost to other sources of information that centre assessors will find helpful.

General overview

The OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in IT fall into two categories.

Applied General:

- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT (180 glh)
- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in IT (360 glh)

Tech Levels:

- OCR Level 3 Introductory Diploma in IT (360 glh)
- OCR Level 3 Foundation Diploma in IT (540 glh)
- OCR Level 3 Diploma in IT (720 glh)
- OCR Level 3 Extended Diploma in IT (1080 glh)

The diplomas have four pathways and a candidate must follow a pathway in order to achieve the overall qualification (including the mandatory examinable components). The pathways are as follows:

For the **Introductory Diploma, Foundation Diploma and Diploma:**

- IT Infrastructure Technician
- Emerging Digital Practitioner
- Application Developer
- Data Analyst

For the **Extended Diploma:**

- Digital Technician
- Application Data Practitioner

In addition, the diplomas require **meaningful employer involvement** to be implemented by the centres. All candidates must engage in activities related to learning and/or assessment where an employer has contributed to the activity. It can be an employer or a person whose job role is directly involved in the IT sector. OCR do not prescribe the amount of employer involvement, but it must be significant and must cover one or more elements of the qualification's mandatory content. They do not have to be involved in the delivery or assessment of every mandatory unit; as it is recognised that it may not be possible to do this.

Centres who are familiar with using a more holistic, project approach have implemented this concept into their delivery. This has been effective and has enabled the candidates to achieve multiple units through working on larger assignment briefs that reflect the working environment within the IT sector. There has been an increase in the number of centres delivering larger projects and it has been noted by the OCR Moderators that this has been highly successful. Centres have succeeded in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding of their candidates resulting in some very creative and innovative products being developed.

Some centres are using or adapting the OCR model assignments which have been developed for the mandatory internally assessed units. Centres are reminded that there is an assignment checking service available through OCR for a fee. OCR do not approve centre assignments before delivery, but centres are advised to consider using the OCR checking service to make sure that in the initial development stages, they receive feedback on the appropriateness of the assignment content (it must not be too prescriptive and provide too much guidance to the candidates). Feedback will also be provided to

centres with suggestions on how the assignment could be developed further to enable it to become more effective.

Most common causes of centres not passing

- The majority of centres delivering the Level 3 qualifications have been very successful with the outcomes for the units. Other centres are still not ensuring that candidates present an appropriate depth of response for some of the higher command verbs such as compare and contrast, evaluate, analyse and assess. These command verbs are associated with the merit and/or distinction criteria. Where the evidence has not fully met the command verbs, OCR Moderators have adjusted the grades for the candidates concerned and provided guidance to the centres. This has enabled the assessors within the centres to provide feedback to the candidates for further development of their evidence. Candidates have been able to resubmit their evidence for the second moderation visit in order to achieve higher grades with a positive outcome. candidates who present a table of the advantages and disadvantages when comparing and contrasting methodologies, software etc are not summarising the outcomes and therefore this is not a true comparison and contrast.
- Centres are reminded that some assessment criteria refer to requirements in the plural, e.g. organisations, businesses, solutions, designs. Candidates are required to provide evidence for at least two for which the plural is referring. Only submitting one example will result in grades being adjusted by the OCR Moderator.
- Another area of weakness is with respect to the test plans and iterative testing of a prototype and/or product. Test plans should be prepared before commencement of the development of the prototype/product and further tests added during its construction. In addition, test plans should be testing the functionality of the prototype/product and not whether there are spelling errors.
- Unit 9: Product development. The following issues have been noted by the OCR Moderators within some centres resulting in grades being adjusted. LO2, M2, requires candidates to agree the inclusion of features that extend or enhance the functionality of the chosen design solution with the identified client. There should be evidence that these enhancements have been incorporated into the design solutions. The best form of evidence would be version 1 and version 2 of the design solutions. LO3, P5 requires candidates to conduct product testing and for M3, analyse the results. Evidence of testing should be iterative while the product is being developed with problems being solved. Therefore, when candidates test against the design specification, this will allow them to effectively analyse the results. LO4, P6, carry out acceptance testing for users in line with the agreed design solution. acceptance testing should be carried out by the client and target users.
- Unit 15: Games design and prototyping. LO2, P3, candidates are required to create a design for an identified game concept. It is therefore a requirement that candidates are given the design concept by the 'client'. LO2, M2, requires candidates to prepare alternative interface designs for the identified game concept. These alternative designs must relate to the same stage of the game, e.g. alternatives screens for the main menu, Level 1, etc.
- Unit 17: Internet of Everything. For LO1, it is important that candidates evidence remains focused on how innovations can transform businesses and the subsequent evaluation of these. Sometimes candidates include generic statements as well as focused evidence.

Common misconceptions

Meaningful Employer Involvement: The certificate and the diploma both require a centre to implement meaningful employer involvement. Some centres believe this to mean work experience for the candidates. While this is one way that it can be achieved there are many other ways that MEI can be addressed as follows:

- Project(s), exercises(s) and/or assessments/examination(s) set with input from industry practitioner(s)
- Units delivered or co-delivered by an industry practitioner(s). This could take the form of master classes or guest lectures
- Industry practitioners operate as 'expert witnesses' that contribute to the assessment of a candidate's work or practice, operating within a specified assessment framework. This may be a specific project(s), exercise(s) or examination(s), or all assessments for a qualification.

Further information can be found on pages 31 and 32 of the centre handbook:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/324475-centre-handbook.pdf>

Teaching Content: The teaching content in every unit state what must be taught to make sure that candidates are able to access the higher grades. Anything which follows an i.e. details what must be taught as part of that area of content. Anything which follows an 'e.g.' is illustrative, it should be noted that where 'e.g.' is used, candidates must know and be able to apply relevant examples in their work, although these do not need to be the same ones specified in the unit content. For internally assessed units centres need to make sure that any assignments created, or any modifications made to an assignment, do not expect the candidate to do more than they have been taught, but must help them to access the full range of grades as described in the grading criteria. A frequent question from centres is whether every bullet point in the teaching content must be included in the candidates' evidence. The answer to this is 'no'. Candidates are expected to draw on the knowledge, skills and understanding that they have been taught and select what is relevant to the context of the assignment brief to which they are working.

Acceptance testing

Many candidates do not understand what is meant by the term acceptance testing. OCR Moderators have reported instances where they have presented the same test plan used for testing the system themselves or they have provided a form for the 'client' to sign to say they accept the system. To clarify, acceptance testing requires the candidates to prepare a test plan where they indicate the tests that they would like the end user to carry out. The end user would complete the plan by stating what the actual outcomes were for each test. The end user may even identify other tests that they have conducted to check that the system functions are required. Acceptance testing may result in acceptance test plans being prepared for the stakeholder/client and their own end-users.

Avoiding potential malpractice

It is important that candidates are taught how to reference their sources and understand how much they can quote from the resource. While candidates have used their own words and interpretation from their research in order to achieve a particular assessment criterion, there are occasions where a candidate has used a quote from a resource without citing the source.

Additional Comments

Evidence:

As centres become more familiar with the requirements for the 2016 specification and more confident in the delivery, OCR Moderators have reported that this has led to more creativity with respect to the types of evidence being presented.

There has been a notable increase in the number of centres where candidates are using video, photographs and podcasts to present their evidence. Video and audio evidence must be of a good quality so that it is clear for the OCR Moderator to view and listen to the content. It has been reported that there have been instances where it has been impossible to hear what the candidate is saying. Photographic evidence representing a candidate's competent performance should enable the candidate to be seen including the activities that they are carrying out. These should be accompanied by a short narrative explaining the context of the photograph.

It is important that candidates are taught how to develop presentations where key points are identified on the slides as bullet points and the detail is provided in the speaker notes. The OCR Moderators have noted that there are still candidates who fill slides with text which would normally be included as speakers notes. This is not an effective use of presentation slides. OCR Moderators have reported that they have seen examples of excellent presentations using video, where candidates have spoken with confidence and demonstrated good understanding of the subject.

Test plans are still a weakness with many centres, and it is important that they reflect industry requirements and how the candidate has tested the functionality of their product as an iterative process. It is important that candidates identify the tests they know they will need to carry out and to add further tests during the development of their prototypes or final products (iterative testing).

Where a unit requires candidates to create only to the prototype stage, it is important that this is available as the evidence and not a full working product. Failure to produce the prototype will result in a candidate's grade being adjusted by the OCR Moderator.

When assessing against the assessment criteria, the assessor must note where the criteria refers to something in the plural, for example, methodologies, solutions, businesses, designs, etc. This means that a candidate must provide more than one and as a minimum two.

When presenting evidence for moderation centres are reminded that all evidence can be submitted for moderation in a digital format, but it would need to be accessible on a centre's PC or laptop. Centres could use the individual Unit Recording Sheets to hyperlink the required evidence against the relevant assessment criteria.

Centres have also been using the **Documentation Toolkit**, that can be accessed under the **teaching activities** section for **Unit 8**.

The documentation toolkit includes a number of document templates which candidates can use. There is a table on page 3 that indicates where certain documents can also be used for other units and not just for Unit 8: Project management.

Centres have provided positive feedback in relation to this resource and OCR Moderators have confirmed that where candidates have used this documentation, their evidence has been of a very good standard.

The moderation visit:

All units presented for moderation should include a Candidate Authentication Form and a Unit Recording Sheet for each unit. The Unit Recording Sheet should contain sufficient detail to provide the OCR Moderator with a justification from the assessor of how the evidence met the assessment criteria. In addition, it must also include a reference to the evidence within the candidate portfolios. This referencing must be specific and not just refer to, for example, 'Document 1'.

Certificate claims must be uploaded onto OCR Interchange at least two weeks before the OCR moderation visit. The centre must not upload predicted grades, but actual grades achieved by the candidates following the assessment and internal standardisation process. OCR Moderators have reported that there have been a number of issues this academic year with centres informing them on the day of the visit that a grade or grades have been uploaded incorrectly or that there are a number of candidates that have 'just completed and been assessed'. The OCR Moderators will always endeavour to accommodate late submission and readjust their sampling strategy, but centres are reminded that once the visit has been completed, the OCR Moderator cannot approve any further claims without a moderation visit taking place. Depending on the time within the academic year, this could be the next visit, the first visit of the following year or an additional visit payable by the centre.

Unit 4: Computer networks (Mandatory unit within the IT Infrastructure Technician pathway)

OCR Moderators have reported that there have been weaknesses with respect to the acceptance testing for P4. The acceptance testing documentation should be more specific in terms of the actual network, rather than generic in nature.

There is an OCR model assignment available for this unit that centres can use or adapt. If centres develop their own assignments, there must be a clear scenario that candidates can work to where they are required to consider the requirements of the client for a network and then work through LO2, LO3 and LO4 in order to develop the network specification and plan.

LO1: Understand the concept of networks

For P1, candidates are required to explain the how network addressing is used. Weaknesses tend to be from candidates describing network addressing rather than its purpose and how it is used. Candidates who are encouraged to include examples tend to provide stronger evidence supporting not only their knowledge but their understanding of network addressing. M1, requires candidates to compare and contrast the OSI and TCP/IP networking models. Weaknesses in evidence resulting in OCR Moderators adjusting grades is due to candidates describing the OSI model and then the TCP/IP model but never actually comparing and contrasting one against the other. They should be looking at the similarities and differences between the two and provide an overview of the comparison (the similarities between the two) and the contrast (the differences between the two). D1, requires candidates to discuss the role of TCP/IP in networks. Weaknesses in evidence and adjustment by the OCR Moderators were due to candidates describing what the TCP/IP model is, rather than extending their evidence to a discussion. P2, requires candidates to explain security considerations for computer networks. The evidence for this assessment criterion has tended to be of a good quality with candidates using well considered examples to aid their explanations.

LO2: Be able to plan computer networks to meet client requirements

This learning outcome is very practical in nature and therefore the evidence should reflect the candidates' competent performance. P3, requires candidates to produce a network specification to meet an identified client's requirements. The evidence for this is the actual network specification which should include relevant sections as indicated within section 2.5 of the teaching content. This should be laid out in an appropriate format that would be used to present to relevant interested parties if the

candidate was working in industry. M2, requires the candidates to justify the security measures that should be included. If the candidates state what these security measures are in P3, they could extend it by including the justification. This would result in P3 and M2 being presented in one document i.e. the network specification. P4, follows on from P3 where candidates will then produce the network plans based on the network specification presented in P3. Guidance on what constitutes network plans can be seen in section 2.6 of the unit teaching content.

LO3: Be able to present network solutions to clients

P5 and M3 could be presented as one piece of evidence. P5, requires the candidates to communicate the network solution to the client and for M3, recommend performance tools to benchmark the network solution. As long as the communicating of the network solution is presented in a professional style, then it can be written or verbal with supporting documentation. A formal document where the network solution is documented with headings similar to those indicated in section 3.1 of the teaching content with the inclusion of the recommendation of the performance tools for benchmarking would be acceptable. Another format for the evidence could be as a formal presentation, but it is important that the presentation is appropriate in style and layout with detailed speaker notes. In addition, a client would also be provided with supporting documentation to take away with them and consider. Presentations can be videoed but must be of a good quality. Witness statements can be accepted, but they must be individual to each candidate and provide the context, detailing how the candidate met the assessment criterion/criteria.

LO4: Be able to plan maintenance activities for computer networks

P6, requires candidates to produce a network maintenance plan. Section 4.1 of the teaching content gives an indication as to what should be included. This would be a formal document and should be presented as such. It would be either retained by the organisation overseeing the network or passed over to the client. Any weakness in evidence is based on candidates not providing an appropriate evaluation for D2. Candidates are required to evaluate the selection of maintenance activities for the network solution. Therefore, the evaluation is based on the content of the network maintenance plan. The candidates' evaluation should determine to what extent the maintenance activities will maintain the functionality of the network.

Unit 13: Social media and digital marketing (optional unit within the Emerging Digital Technology Practitioner, Application Developer and Data Analyst pathways)

LO1: Understand digital marketing

For P1, candidates are required to outline the tools available for digital marketing. This should be a general description of each tool including the essential features of each. Overall, this is evidenced well by candidates, but OCR Moderators have reported occasions where the outlines are no more than an identification of the tools. P2, requires candidates to explain the stages of the digital marketing life cycle. This is usually evidenced very well by candidates who explain the stages and include a detailed account of the purpose of each. For D1, candidates are required to assess the impact of digital marketing for an identified product. OCR Moderators have noted that where candidates have selected a product themselves which they find of interest, the evidence is must stronger and a good assessment of the impact is presented.

LO2: Understand the use of social media in business

P3 requires candidates to describe how social media can be used to gather data. It is important that candidates remain focused on the gathering of data from social media. There have been instances where candidates have deviated from the aspect of data gathering and lose the focus of the assessment criterion. If candidates are being encouraged to work towards the higher grades, then it is advisable that

M1 (explain how data is used as part of social media digital marketing campaigns), follows on from P3. Note the reference to digital marketing campaigns, it is therefore a requirement for candidates to look at how data is used for more than one campaign. Two will suffice. For P4, candidates are required to describe the legal and ethical restrictions on the use of social media as part of digital marketing campaigns. OCR Moderators have noted that there has been an improvement in the evidence presented for this assessment criterion where candidates are remaining focused on legal and ethical restrictions relating to digital marketing campaigns as opposed to general statements to do with legislation.

LO3: Be able to plan content and propose appropriate social media channels for digital marketing campaigns

P5 requires candidates to outline social media channels to be used in a digital marketing campaign. The purpose of the digital marketing campaign should be part of the scenario brief provided to the candidates. Candidates should not be outlining channels in a generic form. It is therefore advisable that candidates are encouraged to provide an introductory paragraph to summarise the digital marketing campaign so that it helps to 'set the scene'. P6 will follow on naturally from P5 where candidates will then describe the target audience for each of the social media channels, they outlined for the digital marketing campaign. For M2 candidates are required to plan the social media content of the digital marketing campaign to meet business objectives. It is therefore important, that the business objectives are made clear to the candidates within the assignment brief. Also note the plural with reference to business objectives indicating that more than one objective should be present. Candidates are only required to plan the content not actually create it. Section 3.2 of the teaching content provides an indication as to what should be considered during the planning stages. D2 requires candidates to justify the use of the social media channels outlined in P5. D2 could therefore, be addressed by candidates on completion of P5 and P6, as the evidence for these criteria will help the candidate to focus on their justification.

LO4: Be able to develop social media digital marketing campaigns

For P7, candidates are required to propose a digital marketing campaign across different social media channels to meet identified business objectives. Candidates who have referred to sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 of the teaching content presented strong evidence for this assessment criterion. While not all of the teaching content is required to be evidenced, the candidates have used the content to help them focus on what is required. M3 requires the candidates to recommend adaptations to current business processes to support social media activities. Within the assignment brief it would benefit candidates if an overview of the current processes in place based on the businesses current marketing strategy is included (although not mandatory). The responses from the candidates should still relate to the business scenario they are addressing. Section 4.4 of the teaching content will support the candidates in what they should focus on. The key here is to encourage the candidates to consider the processes that will need addressing in order to make sure that the campaign remains current, contact with the audience is maintained and the statistics are analysed as a minimum.

Unit 24: Enterprise computing (mandatory unit within both specialist pathways for the extended diploma).

This unit should be delivered as the final unit within the qualification because it draws on the knowledge, skills and understanding that the candidates would have through studying the other units within the course. There is a model assignment available on the OCR website which could be used as it is or adapted as appropriate.

If you consider the two pathways within the extended diploma, the Digital Technician pathway primarily reflects the hardware infrastructure side of IT and the Application Data Practitioner the software side.

Candidates are not expected to focus in depth on the hardware and the software side but on one or the other. The choice is for them to make.

The following is taken from the unit aim section of the Unit 24 specification and provides a very good overview of what enterprise computing is and what the candidates will be considering.

'Enterprise computing' is sold to business users as an entire solution that can be applied broadly across an organisation and then further customised by users within each business function. This means the analytics, reporting, database management and other applications are standard across the system, while the application packages used, and the data accessed in each business function will be different. In this sense, enterprise computing is a departure from finding single software solutions to specific business problems, such as inventory or accounting software. Instead, enterprise computing is intended to offer integrated solutions to these problems. Enterprise computing is a concept for software and hardware solutions designed to meet the needs of large global organisations. '

Within this unit candidates will be required to carry out research based on a scenario. The research will incorporate the knowledge, skills and understanding that they have obtained within their selected pathway. They will be evaluating a global organisation and making recommendations on how enterprise computing could be used to support the business needs. Therefore, it is important that this unit is carried out synoptically when they have secured the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding from other units.

In order to develop effective evidence, it is important that candidates carry out extensive research on the subject of enterprise computing so that they have a good basis to address the assessment criteria.

LO1: Understand the concept of enterprise computing systems.

P1 requires the candidates to explain the term enterprise computing. Without extensive research, candidates would find it difficult to provide a robust explanation of the term. Section 1.1 of the teaching content will give candidates areas to consider. For M1, candidates are required to explain the requirements of an enterprise computing solution. Candidates can therefore immediately focus on the context they have been provided with within the assignment brief. Section 1.2 of the teaching content provides a very good list of the areas that need careful consideration when developing an enterprise computing solution.

LO2: Be able to investigate business requirements for an enterprise computer solution

P2 requires candidates to recommend an enterprise computing solution for business requirements. This assessment criterion naturally flows from the M1 criterion. Section 2.1 of the teaching content provides candidates with a list of areas to consider. They should be encouraged to consider them alongside the areas identified in section 1.2 of the teaching content. This will ensure that they have a strong focus on the intended outcome for the business.

LO3: Be able to develop enterprise computing solutions to meet business requirements

For P3, candidates are required to create an outline scope for a proposed enterprise solution to meet identified business requirements. Section 3.1 of the teaching content indicates what should be included in an outline scope for the solution. It is advisable that candidates are encouraged to address all of the areas listed under section 3.1. M2, requires the candidates to justify the business benefits from the proposed solution. It is advisable for candidates to address M2 after completing P3 as it is a natural progression within the unit. Candidates could incorporate their justifications of the business benefits while creating their outline scope. Section 3.3 of the teaching content provides areas for candidates to consider which are relevant to the business context they are working on. For P4, candidates will develop either the logical design or the physical design depending on what pathway they are following. There is

not a requirement for the candidate to develop both. Section 3.2 of the teaching content provides guidelines on what should be considered when developing a logical and/or physical design. D1 requires the candidates to analyse the security characteristics that the proposed solution must include. Section 3.4 of the teaching content provides good indicators as to what areas need addressing. Candidates should be able to draw on their knowledge, skills and understanding from the other units studied and in particular, Unit 3, cyber security.

LO4: Be able to review the enterprise computing solution with stakeholders

P5 requires the candidates to present their proposed enterprise solution to the stakeholder(s). As this is quite a substantial subject, candidates present stronger evidence when they include supporting material to support any presentation slides (which should contain detailed speaker notes). Candidates should be reminded that they are trying to persuade the stakeholder(s) to 'buy in' to their solution. Therefore, any presentation method selected must be of a good standard with a degree of professionalism. Section 4.1 of the teaching content provides good indicators in relation to the presentation. As with other units, presentations can be videoed. If witness testimonies are provided, they should be individual for each candidate and contain detailed feedback. For M3, candidates must refine their proposed solution based on stakeholder feedback. It is important that evidence is provided of what this feedback was. Candidates should then present a version 2 of their proposal to indicate that the feedback has been taken on board. D2, requires candidates to evaluate the proposed solution against the original specified business requirements. Section 4.2 of the teaching content provides examples of headings which could be used in order to produce an effective evaluation. It is important that candidates go further than describing and/or explaining their solution and the specified business requirements. During the evaluation, candidates should be reminded that they are making judgements of aspects of their proposed solution against what the business requirements are.

Helpful resources

Meaningful employer involvement - centre plan - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-technicals/it-2016-suite/planning-and-teaching/>

Progress tracker - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-technicals/it-2016-suite/planning-and-teaching/>

Qualifications calculator - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-technicals/it-2016-suite/planning-and-teaching/>

Delivery guides for each of the units in each of the pathways - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-technicals/it-2016-suite/planning-and-teaching/>

Command verbs - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/273311-command-verbs-definitions.pdf>

Sample assessment materials, model assignments, candidate exemplars - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-technicals/it-2016-suite/assessment/>

Key documents such as the Unit Recording Sheets, Candidate authentication statement form - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-technicals/it-2016-suite/administration/>

Document toolkit which can be found under teaching activities and Unit 8 - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/471197-documentation-toolkit.doc>

CPD Hub for advisory telephone calls, on-line and live training events, assignment checking service - <https://www.cpdhub.ocr.org.uk>

OCR Subject Specialists - vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk (01223 553998)

Supporting you

For further details of this qualification please visit the subject webpage.

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