GCSE

Business Studies

OCR GCSE in Business Studies J253

March 2011

Contents

Vertical black lines indicate a significant change to previous printed versions of the specification. Changes can be found on pages 8, 10 and 13.

1   About this Qualification

This booklet contains OCR's GCSE specification in Business Studies for teaching from September 2009.

The specification builds upon the broad educational framework set out in the GCSE Business Studies subject criteria (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 2007) and employs an analytical, evaluative and investigative approach to the study of the subject.

The philosophy of the specification incorporates the belief that the study of Business Studies should require candidates both to understand the dynamic environment in which business operates and to appreciate the many and varied factors which impact upon business activity and business behaviour. Candidates will work towards gaining an understanding of the issues facing UK businesses in the 21st century.

A holistic understanding of business and business studies is encouraged. Delivery of the specification content should emphasise the integrated nature of business problems and solutions. The unitised design of the specification, however, enables candidates to be assessed in particular aspects of business activity and business behaviour.

The specification content is best delivered with reference to examples of business activity and business behaviour. These examples should be drawn from local, national and international contexts.

The specification also requires an approach in which business activity and business behaviour is considered from a variety of perspectives. These perspectives include the:

- Interests of different stakeholders in business

- Need for sustainability in business

- Effect of business activity on the environment

- Increasing importance of ethics in business decision making

- Globalisation of business activity.

The specification contains one Controlled Assessment unit for which evidence can be submitted electronically via the OCR Repository.

The specification can reasonably be undertaken by candidates entering this area of study for the first time. In addition, the course of study prescribed by the specification provides a suitable route for progression to AS and Advanced GCEs in this subject, OCR Nationals (or equivalent), the Diploma framework and/or NVQs.

OCR has taken great care in the preparation of this specification and assessment material to avoid bias of any kind.

1.1 GCSE

From September 2009 the GCSE in Business Studies is made up of three mandatory units. Two units are externally assessed and one unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Each unit is comprised of discrete content:

Unit A291 *Marketing and Enterprise*

- This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated (Controlled Assessment).

Unit A292 *Business and People*

- This unit is externally assessed (unseen examination).

Unit A293 *Production, Finance and the External Business Environment*

- This unit is externally assessed (examination based on pre-released case study stimulus material).

1.2 Qualification Title and Levels

This qualification is shown on a certificate as:

- OCR GCSE in Business Studies.

This qualification is approved by the regulatory authorities (QCA, DCELLS and CCEA) as part of the National Qualifications Framework.

Candidates who gain Grades D to G will have achieved an award at Foundation Level 1 (Level 1 of the National Qualifications Framework).

Candidates who gain Grades A* to C will have achieved an award at Intermediate Level 2 (Level 2 of the National Qualifications Framework).

1.3 Aims and Learning Outcomes

The aims of this specification are to:

- Encourage candidates to be inspired, moved and changed by studying a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study

- Allow candidates to gain an insight into related sectors such as economics and accounting

- Prepare candidates to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices

- Appreciate the range of perspectives of different stakeholders in relation to business and economic activities.

The specification must also enable candidates to:

- Engage actively in the study of business in order to develop as effective and independent candidates and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds

- Use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish facts and opinions, to build arguments and make informed judgements

- Develop and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to contemporary issues in a range of local, national and global contexts

- Appreciate the range of perspectives of different stakeholders in relation to business and economic activities

- Consider the extent to which business and economic activity can be ethical and sustainable

- Appreciate diversity and recognise similarities and differences of attitudes and cultures in society.

1.4 Prior Learning/Attainment

Candidates entering this course should have achieved a general educational level equivalent to National Curriculum Level 3, or an Entry 3 at Entry Level within the National Qualifications Framework.

2 Summary of Content

2.1 GCSE Units

Unit A291: Marketing and Enterprise

- Marketing
  - Market research and data collection
  - The marketing mix
  - Marketing in the wider business environment
- Enterprise
  - Enterprise and the entrepreneur
  - The business plan

Unit A292: Business and People

- The structure of business activity
  - The need for business activity
  - Business ownership, trading organisations, growth and location
- The workforce in business
  - Employment and retention
  - Organisation and communication

Unit A293: Production, Finance and the External Business Environment

- Using and managing resources to produce goods and services
  - Types of production methods
  - Management and control of production
  - Production costs
- Financial information and decision making
  - Sources of finance
  - Financial forecasting and analysis
- External influences on business activity
  - The competitive environment
  - Environmental influences and business ethics
  - Government and the UK economy
  - Globalisation and UK business

3 Content

3.1 Unit A291: Marketing and Enterprise

Exemplification of this specification content can be found in the Teacher's Handbook for OCR GCSE Business Studies (J253), which is available on the OCR website.

3.1.1 Marketing

Market research and data collection	Candidates should be able to:
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of, and evaluate, methods of market research
	• Identify methods of, and explain reasons for, market segmentation
	• Understand and discuss the significance of SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis in a marketing context
	• Distinguish between different types of market.
The marketing mix	Candidates should be able to:
	• Analyse and discuss the individual elements of the marketing mix
	• Formulate and evaluate a marketing strategy
	• Discuss how the marketing mix evolves over time.
Marketing in the wider business environment	Candidates should be able to:
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of, and evaluate the use of, e-commerce in marketing
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of, and evaluate, the ways in which franchising can be used in marketing
	• Analyse and discuss the role of the customer service function of a business in supporting both existing and new customers
	• Analyse and discuss the effects of ethical issues on marketing.

3.1.2   Enterprise

Enterprise and the entrepreneur

Candidates should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concept of enterprise in business

- Analyse and discuss the role of the entrepreneur in identifying business opportunities and assisting the start of new business

- Analyse and discuss the nature and rewards of risk taking

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of government, and other, support for enterprise

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the factors which can lead to the success or failure of a business enterprise.

The business plan

Candidates should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the need for planning for business success

- Outline, and explain the importance of, a simple business plan

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between a business plan and a marketing strategy

- Evaluate the importance of a business plan to a new business venture.

3.2   Unit A292: Business and People

Exemplification of this specification content can be found in the Teacher's Handbook for OCR GCSE Business Studies (J253), which is available on the OCR website.

3.2.1   The structure of business activity

The need for business activity

Candidates should be able to:

- Analyse and discuss why business exists

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business stakeholders

- Analyse and discuss how business attempts to respond to the objectives of different business stakeholders

- Analyse and discuss the aims and objectives of business

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of social enterprise

- Analyse and discuss how the aims and objectives of business may change over time and with changing circumstances

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of primary, secondary and tertiary sectors

- Analyse and discuss the changing nature of, and the relative importance of, the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in the UK

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concept of business interdependence and its importance in influencing business activity.

Business ownership, trading organisations, growth and location	Candidates should be able to:
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the main types of business ownership: sole proprietors; partnerships; private and public limited companies; public corporations
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of multinational companies, charities/not for profit organisations and cooperatives as trading organisations
	• Analyse and discuss the relative benefits and limitations of different types of business ownership
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of types of integration and growth
	• Analyse and discuss the features which influence the location of business locally, nationally and internationally.

3.2.2 The workforce in business

Employment and retention	Candidates should be able to:
	• Analyse and discuss the recruitment and selection process
	• Analyse and discuss types of, and the importance of, training
	• Analyse and discuss monetary methods of motivation
	• Calculate changes in employee remuneration
	• Analyse and discuss non-monetary methods of motivation
	• Analyse and discuss the laws which relate to employment
	• Analyse and discuss the role of trade unions.

Organisation and communication	Candidates should be able to:
	• Analyse and discuss the internal organisation of business
	• Analyse and discuss the role of the functional areas of business
	• Analyse and discuss how and why the organisation of a business might change over time
	• Analyse and discuss how and why work patterns for businesses and employees are changing
	• Analyse and discuss methods of communication used by business
	• Discuss the impact of ICT developments on business communication
	• Analyse and discuss the impact of ICT on the workforce.

3.3 Unit A293: Production, Finance and the External Business Environment

Exemplification of this specification content can be found in the Teacher's Handbook for OCR GCSE Business Studies (J253), which is available on the OCR website.

3.3.1 Using and managing resources to produce goods and services

Types of production methods

Candidates should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of job, batch, process and flow methods of production

- Analyse and discuss reasons for choice

- Analyse and discuss the importance of adding value in a dynamic competitive environment.

Management and control of production

Candidates should be able to:

- Analyse and discuss methods of increasing the efficiency of production.

Production costs

Candidates should be able to:

- Calculate, explain and interpret fixed, variable, average and total costs

- Analyse and discuss the importance of size of business and scale of production – economies and diseconomies of scale

- Discuss ways in which business may respond to changing external costs

- Calculate, plot and interpret break-even

- Evaluate break-even as a decision making tool.

3.3.2   Financial information and decision making

Sources of finance	Candidates should be able to:
	• Analyse and discuss the need for, and use of, finance
	• Evaluate sources of finance
	• Analyse and discuss influences on the choice of finance.

Financial forecasting and analysis	Candidates should be able to:
	• Calculate, interpret and analyse cash flow forecasts
	• Recommend methods of dealing with forecast cash flow problems
	• Evaluate cash flow forecasts as a decision making tool
	• Demonstrate understanding of profit as a reward for enterprise and risk taking
	• Calculate, interpret, and make use of, revenue, cost and profit data.

3.3.3   External influences on business activity

The competitive environment	Candidates should be able to:
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of competitive and monopoly markets
	• Analyse and discuss how a business may change its competitive environment
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of why the government promotes competition.

Environmental influences and business ethics	Candidates should be able to:
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how business and consumers use the environment as a resource
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how business and consumers have, and are, responding to pressure for greater environmental responsibility
	• Discuss the social costs and benefits of business activity
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of environmental issues; analyse and discuss the responsibility of, and opportunities for, business
	• Analyse and discuss sustainability and business
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of ethical business behaviour.
Government and the UK economy	Candidates should be able to:
	• Discuss how business might be affected by changes in the level of government spending and taxation
	• Discuss how business might be affected by changes in the level of the rate of interest
	• Discuss how business might be affected by rising, and falling, consumer incomes
	• Discuss how business might be affected by changes in the level of employment
	• Discuss how changes to the population affect business activity.
Globalisation and UK business	Candidates should be able to:
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of globalisation
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the UK's international trade with Europe and other major trading partners
	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how UK business competes internationally
	• Calculate, interpret and analyse the effect of exchange rate movement on business.

4 Schemes of Assessment

4.1 GCSE Scheme of Assessment

GCSE Business Studies J253

Unit A291: Marketing and Enterprise

25% of the total GCSE marks
Controlled Assessment
60 marks

Candidates select **one** of the two Controlled Assessment tasks made available by OCR.

Candidates submit **one** Controlled Assessment task in the form of a report. The report should comprise the **three** investigations for assessment.

Please refer to Section 5 of the Business Studies specification for instructions on completing Controlled Assessment tasks.

It is recommended that candidates spend up to 16 hours on the Controlled Assessment task:

- Up to ten hours on research/data collection

- Up to six hours writing a report.

For guidance on the suggested total length of each candidate's Controlled Assessment task evidence (report comprising the **three** investigations for assessment) see section 5.3.4.

This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Unit A292: Business and People

25% of the total GCSE marks
1 hr written paper
60 marks

This question paper consists of **two** compulsory short-answer, data-response questions.

Candidates answer **both** questions.

This unit is externally assessed.

Unit A293: Production, Finance and the External Business Environment

50% of the total GCSE marks
1 hr 30 mins written paper
90 marks

This question paper consists of **three** compulsory questions based on the pre-released case study stimulus material.
The pre-released case-study stimulus material is made available by OCR.
A clean copy of the case study will be issued to candidates with the question paper.

Candidates answer **all three** questions.

This unit is externally assessed.

4.2 Entry Options

GCSE candidates must be entered for all three units.

Candidates must be entered for certification to claim their overall GCSE qualification grade. All candidates should be entered under the following certification code:

OCR GCSE in Business Studies – J253.

4.3 Tiers

This scheme of assessment is untiered, covering all of the ability range grades from A* to G. Candidates achieving less than the minimum mark for Grade G will be ungraded.

4.4 Assessment Availability

There are two examination series each year, in January and June.

Unit	January 2010	June 2010	January 2011	June 2011	January 2012 etc	June 2012 etc
A291	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A292	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A293		✓		✓		✓

GCSE certification is available for the first time in June 2011, and each January and June thereafter.

4.5 Assessment Objectives

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1 Recall, select and communicate

- Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology

AO2 Apply skills, knowledge and understanding

- Apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks

AO3 Analyse and evaluate evidence

- Analyse and evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present appropriate conclusions

AO weightings

The relationship between the units and the assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment is shown in the following grid.

Unit	% of GCSE			Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	
Unit A291: *Marketing and Enterprise*	8	10	7	25%
Unit A292: *Business and People*	12	8	5	25%
Unit A293: *Production, Finance and the External Business Environment*	15	17	18	50%
	35%	35%	30%	100%

4.6 Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication is assessed in all units and credit may be restricted if communication is unclear. Quality of written communication will be assessed qualitatively, as an integral part of the judgement on a question. Questions in which quality of written communication is to be assessed will be indicated on the question paper accordingly (*).

Candidates are expected to:

- Ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear

- Present information in a form that suits its purpose

- Use a suitable structure and style of writing.

5   Controlled Assessment

5.1   The Controlled Assessment Units

Unit A291 has been designed to be internally assessed, applying the principles of Controlled Assessment. Controls are set within the assessments so that validity and reliability are ensured and the assessors can confidently authenticate the candidates' work. These controls take a variety of forms in each of the stages of the assessment process: task setting, task taking and task marking. Within each of these three stages there are different levels of control. This section sets out the OCR approach.

5.2   Task Setting

5.2.1   The OCR approach

For GCSE in Business Studies, OCR will assume a high level of control for task setting of Unit A291. For Unit A291, **two** Controlled Assessment tasks will be made available by OCR and will be replaced every year. These Controlled Assessment tasks have been designed to meet the full assessment requirements of the unit. Candidates are expected to have met the requirements of the unit content in order to complete **one** of the Controlled Assessment tasks.

5.2.2   Using Controlled Assessment tasks

For Unit A291 candidates select **one** of the two Controlled Assessment tasks made available by OCR. Each Controlled Assessment task comprises a business scenario and **three** compulsory investigations for assessment. A data set for use by candidates will also be provided by OCR and will be equally relevant to **both** Controlled Assessment tasks.

Candidates submit **one** Controlled Assessment task in the form of a business report. The report should comprise the **three** investigations for assessment.

Investigation 1 is marked out of a total of 10 marks and investigations 2 and 3 are each marked out of a total of 25 marks.

For each Controlled Assessment task, investigation 1 will require candidates to use the data set provided in order to arrive at a recommendation. Each of investigations 2 and 3 provide candidates with the opportunity to make use of local resources and collect appropriate additional primary and/or secondary data in order to arrive at their recommendation(s).

The live OCR Controlled Assessment tasks (business scenarios, compulsory investigations for assessment and data set) must **NOT** be used as practice material. Centres should devise their own practice material using the OCR specimen Controlled Assessment task as guidance.

5.3 Task Taking

5.3.1 The OCR approach

For GCSE in Business Studies, task taking comprises both research/data collection and writing of a report. Research/data collection, in the form of appropriate primary and/or secondary research, should be undertaken by candidates in order to supplement the data provided by OCR within the data set. Both the data contained within the data set and candidates' own research/data will inform candidates' writing of a report.

OCR will assume a limited level of control in respect of research/data collection and a high level of control in respect of writing of a report. The task-taking parameters for both research/data collection and writing of a report are outlined below.

5.3.2 Definitions of the controls

(a) **Authenticity control:** The candidate can complete the research/data collection phase individually or in a group without direct teacher supervision. The writing of the report must be completed individually and under direct supervision. The teacher must be able to authenticate the work.

(b) **Feedback control:** Feedback to the candidate will be permissible but tightly defined. Within this specification, OCR expects teachers to equip the candidate with the knowledge, understanding and skills before they begin the Controlled Assessment task. It should be remembered that candidates are required to reach their own judgements and conclusions without any guidance or assistance. When supervising the Controlled Assessment task, teachers are expected to:

- Offer candidates advice on how best to prepare for the research/data collection and writing of a report elements of this unit

- Exercise continuing supervision of work in order to monitor progress and to prevent plagiarism

- Exercise continuing supervision of practical work to ensure essential compliance with Health and Safety requirements

- Ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the specification requirements and can be assessed in accordance with the specified marking criteria and procedures.

(c) **Time control:** The Controlled Assessment task should be completed within the suggested time limit (see section 4.1) and supervised and marked by the teacher. Some of the research/data collection, by its very nature, may be undertaken outside the centre. The use and application of the data set and the candidate's research/data within the report will be undertaken under direct teacher supervision. With all internally assessed work, the teacher must be satisfied that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own work and be able to authenticate it using the specified procedure.

(d) **Collaboration control:** Group work is permissible for the research/data collection phase of this unit. However, each candidate must write the report individually. Candidates will be analysing the outcome of the group work on an individual basis before forming their own conclusions.

(e) **Resource control:** Access to resources will be limited to those appropriate to the Controlled Assessment task. Candidates will need to be provided with the most appropriate materials and equipment to allow them full access to the marking criteria but this must be closely monitored and supervised. During the writing of a report phase, candidates may have access to the notes which they have made during the research/data collection phase of task taking. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that these are indeed research notes and do not include a draft or final version of a report. The writing of a report must be completed under supervised conditions. Candidates should include appropriate charts, graphs, images and tables within their report. Charts, graphs, images and tables may be produced in the research/data collection phase.

The centre must ensure that candidates do not have access to email or the internet, or any information which is not their research notes or charts, graphs, images and tables produced in the research/data collection phase, for the writing of a report.

5.3.3   Quality assuring the controls

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that the controls set out in the specification and the individual units are imposed.

5.3.4   Completing the Controlled Assessment task

Candidates should be allowed sufficient time to complete the Controlled Assessment task. Both the research/data collection and writing of a report elements of the Controlled Assessment task can be completed in several sessions.

It is recommended that candidates spend up to 16 hours on the Controlled Assessment task:

- Up to ten hours on research/data collection

- Up to six hours writing a report.

OCR recommends that the total length of each candidate's Controlled Assessment task evidence (report comprising the **three** investigations for assessment) is approximately 2000 words.

Each candidate must produce an individual (and authentic) report comprising the three investigations. It is particularly important that those candidates who conducted research/data collection as part of a group still produce an individual report.

The teachers may give appropriate support and guidance to the candidate during the research/data collection phase but not during the writing of a report phase. This support and guidance should focus on checking that candidates understand what is expected of them. It is not acceptable for teachers to provide model answers or to work through answers in detail.

Candidates may use information from any relevant source to help them with writing their report.

Where a dataset or case material is provided, it is acknowledged that candidates in their responses will refer to situations in the assessment material, but as this is fictitious this does not break any rules of confidentiality or copyright. However, in general, candidates must be guided on the use of information from other sources to ensure that confidentiality and intellectual property rights are maintained at all times. It is essential that any material directly used from a source is appropriately and rigorously referenced.

5.3.5 Presentation of work

Candidates must observe certain procedures in the production of the Controlled Assessment task.

- Tables, graphs and spreadsheets may be produced using appropriate ICT. These should be inserted into the report at the appropriate place.

- Any copied material must be suitably acknowledged.

- Quotations must be clearly marked and a reference provided wherever possible.

- Work submitted for moderation or marking must be marked with the:

  – Centre number
  – Centre name
  – Candidate number
  – Candidate name
  – Unit code and title
  – Assignment title.

Work submitted on paper for moderation or marking must be secured by treasury tags. Work submitted in digital format (CD or online) must be in a suitable file structure as detailed in Appendix B with each file clearly named with the unit code, centre number and candidate number.

5.4 Task Marking

5.4.1 The OCR approach

For GCSE in Business Studies, OCR will assume a medium to high level of control in relation to the marking of the Controlled Assessment task. The Controlled Assessment task will be marked by the centre assessor(s) using awarding body marking criteria and guidance, and moderated by the OCR-appointed moderator. For this GCSE in Business Studies, external moderation will take the form of postal moderation or e-moderation where evidence in a digital format is required.

5.4.2 Applying the assessment criteria

The starting point for marking the Controlled Assessment task is the marking criteria for the Controlled Assessment unit. These contain levels of criteria for the skills, knowledge and understanding that the candidate is required to demonstrate. Before the start of the course, and for use at INSET training events, OCR will provide exemplification through real or simulated candidate work which will help to clarify the level of achievement the assessors should be looking for when awarding marks.

5.4.3 Use of 'best fit' approach to marking criteria

The assessment of the Controlled Assessment task should be marked by the teacher according to the given marking criteria within the relevant unit using a 'best fit' approach. For each of the assessment objectives, the descriptor provided in the marking criteria that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked should be selected.

For each investigation (1, 2 and 3), a mark is awarded for each assessment objective: AO1, AO2 and AO3. The mark for each investigation is found by totalling the marks awarded for each of the assessment objectives AO1, AO2 and AO3. The mark for the Controlled Assessment task is found by totalling the marks awarded for each of the investigations (1, 2 and 3).

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The award of marks **must be** directly related to the marking criteria.

Teachers use their professional judgement in selecting the descriptor that best describes the work of the candidate.

To select the most appropriate mark within the descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- Where the candidate's work *convincingly* meets the descriptor, the highest mark in the mark range should be awarded.

- Where the candidate's work *adequately* meets the descriptor, the most appropriate mark in the middle of the mark range, or the mark in the middle of the range (as appropriate), should be awarded.

- Where the candidate's work *just* meets the statement, the lower mark in the mark range should be awarded.

Where there are only two marks in a band (Investigation 1: AO3) the choice will be between work which, in most respects, meets the statement and work which *just* meets the statement.

Centres should use the full range of marks available to them; centres must award *full* marks in any band for work which fully meets that descriptor. This is work which is 'the best one could expect from candidates working at that level'.

The final mark for the candidate for this unit is out of a total of 60 and is found by totalling the marks for each of investigations 1, 2 and 3.

5.4.4   Authentication

Teachers 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 teacher 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 teacher 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 assessors to check authenticity of the work and provide general feedback.

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 learner being disqualified. Plagiarism sometimes occurs innocently when learners are unaware of the need to reference or acknowledge their sources. It is, therefore, important that centres ensure that candidates understand that the 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. The potential risks of failing to acknowledge such material should be emphasised to the candidate. The candidate must sign a declaration to this effect. Centres should reinforce this message to ensure candidates understand what is expected of them.

Please note: Centres must confirm to OCR that the report produced by candidates is authentic. The Centre Authentication Form includes a declaration for assessors to sign. It is a requirement of the QCA Common Criteria for all Qualifications that proof of authentication is received.

5.4.5   Internal standardisation

It is important that all internal assessors, working in the same subject area, work to common standards. Centres must ensure that the internal standardisation of marks across assessors and teaching groups takes place using an appropriate procedure.

This can be done in a number of ways. In the first year, reference material and OCR training meetings will provide a basis for centres' own standardisation. In subsequent years, this, or centres' own archive material, may be used. Centres are advised to hold preliminary meetings of staff involved to compare standards through cross-marking a small sample of work. After most marking has been completed, a further meeting at which work is exchanged and discussed will enable final adjustments to be made.

5.4.6   Moderation

All work is marked by the teacher and internally standardised by the centre. Marks are then submitted to OCR, after which moderation takes place in accordance with OCR procedures: refer to the OCR website for submission dates of the marks to OCR. The purpose of moderation is to ensure that the standard of the award of marks for work is the same for each centre and that each teacher has applied the standards appropriately across the range of candidates within the centre.

The sample of work which is presented to the Moderator for moderation must show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria.

Each candidate's work should have a cover sheet attached to it with a summary of the marks awarded for each investigation. If the work is to be submitted in digital format, this cover sheet should also be submitted electronically within each candidate's files.

5.5   Minimum Requirements for Controlled Assessment

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced.

If a candidate submits no work for an internally assessed component, then the candidate should be indicated as being absent from that component on the mark sheets submitted to OCR. If a candidate completes any work at all for an internally assessed component, then the work should be assessed according to the internal assessment objectives and marking instructions and the appropriate mark awarded, which may be zero.

6   Technical Information

6.1   Making Unit Entries

Please note that centres must be registered with OCR in order to make any entries, including estimated entries. It is recommended that centres apply to OCR to become a registered centre well in advance of making their first entries. Centres must have made an entry for a unit in order for OCR to supply the appropriate forms and/or moderator details for Controlled Assessments.

It is essential that unit entry codes are quoted in all correspondence with OCR.

For Unit A291 candidates must be entered for either component 01 or 02. Centres must enter all of their candidates for ONE of these components. It is not possible for centres to offer both components within the same series.

Unit entry code	Component code	Submission method	Unit titles
A291	01	*OCR Repository*	Marketing and Enterprise
	02	*Postal moderation*	
A292	-	-	Business and People
A293	-	-	Production, Finance and the External Business Environment

6.2   Terminal Rules

Candidates must take at least 40% of the assessment in the same series they enter for the full course qualification certification.

Units can be taken in any order as long as the terminal rules are satisfied.

6.3   Unit and Qualification Re-sits

Candidates may re-sit each unit once before entering for certification for a GCSE.

Candidates may enter for the qualification an unlimited number of times.

6.4 Making Qualification Entries

Candidates must enter for qualification certification separately from unit assessment(s). If a certification entry is **not** made, no overall grade can be awarded.

Candidates may enter for:

- GCSE certification (entry code J253).

A candidate who has completed all the units required for the qualification must enter for certification in the same examination series in which the terminal rules are satisfied.

GCSE certification is available for the first time in June 2011, and each January and June thereafter.

6.5 Grading

GCSE results are awarded on the scale A* to G. Units are awarded a* to g. Grades are indicated on certificates. However, results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (G or g) will be recorded as *unclassified* (U or u) and this is **not** certificated.

In unitised schemes, candidates can take units across several different series provided the terminal rules are satisfied. They can also re-sit units. When working out candidates' overall grades, OCR needs to be able to compare performance on the same unit in different series when different grade boundaries have been set, and between different units. OCR uses uniform marks to enable this to be done.

A candidate's uniform mark is calculated from the candidate's raw marks. The raw mark boundary marks are converted to the equivalent uniform mark boundary. Marks between grade boundaries are converted on a pro rata basis.

When unit results are issued, the candidate's unit grade and uniform mark are given. The uniform mark is shown out of the maximum uniform mark for the unit e.g. 41/60.

The specification is graded on a Uniform Mark Scale. The uniform mark thresholds for each of the assessments are shown below:

(GCSE) Unit weighting	Maximum unit uniform mark	Unit grade								u
		a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	
50%	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0
25%	60	54	48	42	36	30	24	18	12	0

The candidate's uniform marks for each unit are aggregated and grades for the specification are generated on the following scale.

Qualification	Maximum uniform mark	Qualification grade								U
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
GCSE	240	216	192	168	144	120	96	72	48	0

Awarding grades

The written papers will have a total weighting of 75% and Controlled Assessment a weighting of 25%.

A candidate's mark for each paper will be combined with the uniform mark for the Controlled Assessment to give a total uniform mark for the specification. The candidate's grade will be determined by the total uniform mark.

6.6   Enquiries about Results

Under certain circumstances, a centre may wish to query the grade available to one or more candidates or to submit an appeal against an outcome of such an enquiry. Enquiries about unit results must be made immediately following the series in which the relevant unit was taken (by the Enquiries about Results deadline).

Please refer to the *JCQ Post-Results Services* booklet and the *OCR Admin Guide* for further guidance about action on the release of results. Copies of the latest versions of these documents can be obtained from the OCR website.

6.7   Shelf-Life of Units

Individual unit results, prior to certification of the qualification, have a shelf-life limited only by that of the qualification.

6.8   Guided Learning Hours

GCSE Business Studies requires 120 to 140 guided learning hours in total.

6.9   Code of Practice/Subject Criteria/Common Criteria Requirements

This specification complies in all respects with the current *GCSE, GCE, GNVQ and AEA Code of Practice* as available from the QCA website, the subject criteria for GCSE Business subjects and *The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications 2004*.

6.10 Classification Codes

Every specification is assigned to a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this specification is 3210.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, schools and colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCSE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should seek advice, for example from their centre or the institution to which they wish to progress.

6.11 Disability Discrimination Act Information Relating to this Specification

GCSEs often require assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher-level courses.

The revised GCSE qualifications and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments and to demonstrate what they know and can do. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to the assessment. Information on reasonable adjustments is found in *Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council www.jcq.org.uk.

Candidates who are unable to access part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

The access arrangements permissible for use in this specification are in line with QCA's GCSE subject criteria equalities review and are as follows:

	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Readers	Y	All written examinations
Scribes	Y	All written examinations
Practical assistants	Y	All written examinations
Word processors	Y	All written examinations
Transcripts	Y	All written examinations
BSL signers	Y	All written examinations
Live speaker	Y	All written examinations
MQ papers	Y	All written examinations
Extra time	Y	All written examinations

We do not foresee any part of the assessment forming a barrier to any student.

6.12 Arrangements for Candidates with Particular Requirements

Candidates who are not disabled under the terms of the DDA may be eligible for access arrangements to enable them to demonstrate what they know and can do. Candidates who have been fully prepared for the assessment but who are ill at the time of the examination, or are too ill to take part of the assessment, may be eligible for special consideration. Centres should consult the *Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council.

6.13 OCR Repository

The OCR Repository allows centres to submit moderation samples in electronic format.

The OCR GCSE Business Studies unit A291 can be submitted electronically to the OCR Repository via Interchange: please check Section 6.1 for unit entry codes for the OCR Repository.

More information on the OCR Repository can be found in Appendix B: Guidance for the Production of Electronic Controlled Assessment. Instructions for how to upload files to OCR using the OCR Repository can be found on OCR Interchange.

7   Other Specification Issues

7.1   Overlap with other Qualifications

There is a small degree of overlap between the content of this specification and those for GCSE in Applied Business, Economics, and Leisure and Tourism.

7.2   Progression from this Qualification

GCSE qualifications are general qualifications which enable candidates either to progress directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications.

Progression to further study from GCSE will depend upon the number and nature of the grades achieved. Broadly, candidates who are awarded mainly Grades D to G at GCSE could either strengthen their base through further study of qualifications at Level 1 within the National Qualifications Framework or could proceed to Level 2. Candidates who are awarded mainly Grades A* to C at GCSE would be well prepared for study at Level 3 within the National Qualifications Framework.

7.3   Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Economic and Cultural Issues

This specification offers opportunities which can contribute to an understanding of these issues in the following topics:

	A291	A292	A293
Spiritual		✔	
Moral	✔	✔	✔
Ethical	✔	✔	✔
Social		✔	✔
Legislative	✔	✔	✔
Economic		✔	✔
Cultural	✔	✔	

7.4 Sustainable Development, Health and Safety Considerations and European Developments, consistent with International Agreements

Sustainable development and the environment are themes addressed in Unit A293. Health and Safety issues are also addressed within Unit A293.

The impact of EU membership, the single market and the Eurozone on individuals and business is an integral part of this specification. Specific reference to the EU, the single market and the Eurozone is made in Unit A293.

7.5 Avoidance of Bias

OCR has taken great care in preparation of this specification and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind.

7.6 Language

This specification and associated assessment materials are in English only.

7.7 Key Skills

This specification provides opportunities for the development of the Key Skills of *Communication*, *Application of Number*, *Information Technology*, *Working with Others*, *Improving Own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving* at Levels 1 and/or 2. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each unit.

The following table indicates where opportunities may exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 1 and/or 2 for each unit.

Unit	C		AoN		IT		WwO		IoLP		PS	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
A291	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A292	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A293	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Detailed opportunities for generating Key Skills evidence through this specification are posted on the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk). A summary document for Key Skills Coordinators showing ways in which opportunities for Key Skills arise within GCSE courses has been published.

7.8 ICT

In order to play a full part in modern society, candidates need to be confident and effective users of ICT. Where appropriate, candidates should be given opportunities to use ICT in order to further their study of Business Studies.

The assessment of this course does not require candidates to use ICT; however, opportunities for candidates to use ICT to further their study of Business Studies include:

- Use of word-processing packages (report writing, etc)

- Use of spreadsheet/database packages (collating, calculating, graphing and interpreting data, etc)

- Use of graphics packages (promotional material, etc).

7.9 Citizenship

Since September 2002, the National Curriculum for England at Key Stage 4 has included a mandatory programme of study for Citizenship. Parts of this Programme of Study may be delivered through an appropriate treatment of other subjects.

This section identifies where this specification might compliment the programme of study for Citizenship.

1.2 Rights and responsibilities	
a	Exploring different kinds of rights and obligations and how these affect individuals and communities
b	Understanding that individuals, organisations and governments have responsibilities to ensure that rights are balanced supported and protected
c	Investigating ways in which rights can compete and conflict, and understanding that hard decisions have to be made to try and balance these

1.3 Identities and diversity: living together in the UK	
c	Considering the interconnections between the UK and the rest of Europe and the wider world

2.1 Critical thinking and enquiry	
a	Question and reflect on different ideas, opinions, assumptions, beliefs and values when exploring topical and controversial issues and problems
b	Research, plan and undertake enquiries into issues or problems, using a range of information, sources and methods
c	Interpret and analyse critically sources used, identifying different values, ideas and viewpoints and recognising bias
d	Evaluate different viewpoints, exploring connections and relationships between viewpoints and actions in different contexts (from local to global)

2.2 Advocacy and representation	
a	Evaluate critically different ideas and viewpoints including those with which they do not necessarily agree
b	Explain their viewpoint, drawing conclusions from what they have learnt through research, discussion and actions, including formal debates and votes
c	Present a convincing argument that takes account of, and represents, different viewpoints, to try to persuade others to think again, change or support them

2.3 Taking informed and responsible action	
a	Explore creative approaches to taking action on problems and issues to achieve intended purposes
d	Assess critically the impact of their actions on communities and the wider world, now and in the future, and make recommendations for future action

3 Range and content	
a	The study of citizenship should include political, legal and human rights and freedoms in a range of contexts from local to global
i	The study of citizenship should include policies and practices for sustainable development and their impact on the environment
k	The study of citizenship should include the rights and responsibilities of consumers, employers and employees

4 Curriculum opportunities	
a	Debate, in groups and whole-class discussions, topical and controversial issues, including those of concern to young people and their communities
c	Opportunity for candidates to work individually or in groups, taking on different roles and responsibilities
h	Opportunity for candidates to take into account a range of contexts, such as school, neighbourhood, local, regional, national, European, international and global, as relevant to different topics
i	Opportunity for candidates to use and interpret different media and ICT both as sources of information and as a means of communicating ideas

Appendix A: Grade Descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the assessment may be balanced by better performance in others.

The grade descriptors have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

Grade F

Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of some basic aspects of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They communicate their ideas using everyday language. They use some basic business terminology.

They carry out straightforward investigations and tasks using a limited range of skills. They apply some knowledge and understanding to select and organise basic information from a limited range of sources to investigate business organisations.

They identify some evidence to analyse problems and issues and make judgements. They present simple conclusions that are sometimes supported by evidence.

Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They use business terminology appropriately.

They plan and carry out investigations and tasks using a range of skills appropriately. They apply their knowledge and understanding to select and organise relevant information from a variety of sources to investigate business organisations in different contexts.

They use and evaluate evidence to analyse problems and issues with some accuracy, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions that are supported by evidence.

Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They understand and use business terminology accurately and appropriately.

They plan and carry out effectively a range of investigations and tasks using a wide range of skills competently. They apply their knowledge and critical understanding effectively to select and organise information from a wide range of sources, and to investigate business organisations in a variety of contexts.

They use and evaluate quantitative and qualitative evidence effectively with a high degree of accuracy to analyse problems and issues, and make informed and reasoned judgements to present reasoned and substantiated conclusions.

Appendix B: Guidance for the Production of Electronic Controlled Assessment

Unit A291 comprises **one** Controlled Assessment task in the form of a report. The report should comprise the **three** investigations for assessment.

Structure for evidence

A Controlled Assessment task portfolio is a folder containing the candidate's report. Folders should be organised in a structured way so that the evidence can be accessed easily by a teacher or moderator. This structure is commonly known as a folder tree. It would be helpful if the location of candidates' reports is made clear by naming each folder appropriately and by use of an index, called 'Home Page'.

The Controlled Assessment task portfolio must detail the candidate's centre number, candidate number, surname and forename, together with the Unit code A291; the Controlled Assessment task portfolio must be clearly identified as the work of one candidate.

Each candidate produces a single report. This should be contained within the Controlled Assessment task portfolio.

Each candidate's Controlled Assessment task portfolio should be stored in a secure area on the centre network. Prior to submitting the Controlled Assessment portfolio to OCR, the centre should add a folder to the folder tree containing Controlled Assessment and summary forms.

Data formats for evidence

In order to minimise software and hardware compatibility issues, it will be necessary to save candidates' work using an appropriate file format.

Candidates must use formats appropriate to the evidence that they are providing and appropriate to viewing for assessment and moderation. Open file formats or proprietary formats for which a downloadable reader or player is available are acceptable. Where this is not available, the file format is not acceptable.

Electronic Controlled Assessment is designed to give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do using current technology. Candidates do not gain marks for using more sophisticated formats or for using a range of formats. A candidate who chooses to use only digital photographs (as required by the specification) and word documents will not be disadvantaged by that choice.

Evidence submitted is likely to be in the form of word-processed documents, PowerPoint presentations, digital photos and digital video.

To ensure compatibility, all files submitted must be in the formats listed below. Where new formats become available that might be acceptable, OCR will provide further guidance. OCR advises against changing the file format that the document was originally created in. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the electronic portfolios submitted for moderation are accessible to the moderator and fully represent the evidence available for each candidate.

Accepted File Formats

Structured markup formats

XML (*xml)

Text formats

Comma Separated Values (.csv)

PDF (.pdf)

Rich text format (.rtf)

Text document (.txt)

Microsoft Office suite

PowerPoint (.ppt)

Word (.doc)

Excel (.xls)

Visio (.vsd)

Project (.mpp)