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Business

GCSE 2012
Business and
Communication
Systems

Specification

J230

Version 1

April 2012



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1 Introduction to GCSE Business and Communication Systems

1.1 Overview of GCSE Business and Communication Systems

Unit A265 <i>Businesses and their communication systems</i>	Written paper 1 hour 30 mins – 90 marks 50% of the qualification Question Paper: Candidates answer all questions.
+	
Unit A266 <i>Developing business communication systems</i>	Controlled assessment Approx 15 hours – 60 marks 25% of the qualification Candidates choose one of two scenarios.
+	
Unit A267 <i>ICT skills for business communication systems</i>	Practical examination 1 hour – 60 marks 25% of the qualification The examination has two tasks. Candidates complete both tasks.

1.2 Guided learning hours

GCSE Business and Communication Systems requires 120–140 guided learning hours in total.

1.3 Aims and learning outcomes

GCSE specifications in business subjects should encourage learners to be inspired, moved and challenged by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and gain an insight into related sectors. They should prepare candidates to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

The aims of this specification are to enable candidates to:

- engage actively in the study of business in order to develop as effective and independent learners 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 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.

1.4 Prior learning

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 Content of GCSE Business and Communication Systems

2.1 Unit A265: *Businesses and their communication systems*

In this unit candidates will be introduced to communication systems and the business context within which they operate.

This specification has been written to reflect the technologies which it is expected will be used by business organisations over the next few years. The technologies listed in the examples/guidance are not exhaustive however, and some may be superseded by those which emerge during the life of this qualification.

Whilst candidates will not be directly assessed on their knowledge of technologies not listed in this specification, candidates should be aware of new technologies and the circumstances in which they are used by business organisations. Scenarios and questions in the A265 examination will aim to reflect the changing circumstances under which business communications take place. For example, during the life of this qualification it is anticipated that business communications will increasingly take place using portable technologies rather than traditional desktop computers, particularly as employees and consumers make increasing use of these devices.

2.1.1 Business activity

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main reasons for starting a business
- describe how a business is started
- analyse the benefits and drawbacks of different types of business organisations
- describe the main features of business organisations
- evaluate why business organisations might succeed or fail in a given situation
- assess the impact of uncertainty on business organisations
- evaluate the role of business within society.

Examples/guidance

Types of business organisation:

- sole trader
- partnership
- private limited company
- public limited company
- franchise
- charity
- public sector service provider, e.g. schools, hospitals.

Features include:

- main functional areas and their key activities
- hierarchical and flat organisation structures.

Examples of uncertainty include the possible impact of:

- change in the market
- increased competition
- external influences.

The role of business in society includes:

- how business organisations may impact on society
- how society may impact on businesses.

2.1.2 Competition

Candidates must be able to:

- describe how a business can monitor the effectiveness of its own competitive position
- evaluate the actions a business can take in order to be more competitive than its rivals.

Examples/guidance

Monitoring includes:

- market and sales data
- market research/customer surveys.

Actions include:

- pricing
- promotion
- new product development
- customer service.

2.1.3 Customers

Candidates must be able to:

- describe why customers are important to the success of business organisations
- evaluate the actions business organisations can take in order to ensure good customer relationships.

Examples/guidance

Actions include:

- market research
- after-sales service, e.g. telephone help-lines and websites
- secret shoppers.

2.1.4 Ethics and social responsibility

Candidates must be able to:

- describe ways in which business organisations can act in an ethical and socially responsible manner
- evaluate the impact on business organisations of acting (and not acting) in an ethical and socially responsible manner
- evaluate ways in which business organisations can act in a sustainable manner.

Examples/guidance

The assessment of impact should cover both the actions taken by, and the effects on, the business (e.g. on costs and profit).

Examples of ways in which business organisations can act in a sustainable manner:

- source of materials
- efficiency
- disposal of waste
- packaging.

2.1.5 The legal framework

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the principles of the following types of legislation:
 - health and safety
 - data protection
 - access to information
 - electronic communication
 - consumer protection
 - copyright and computer misuse
 - employment law
 - environmental protection, e.g. the WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) directive on electronic equipment
 - any subsequent relevant legislation
- analyse the actions required of business organisations in order to comply with the above legislation
- evaluate the impact on business organisations of the need to comply with the above legislation.

Examples/guidance

- Candidates should have a general understanding of the main principles of this legislation.
- Candidates are not required to have a detailed knowledge of the main components of the legislation but should have an understanding of the main requirements of the legislation for business organisations, their employees and their customers.
- The assessment of impact should cover both compliance actions and the overall business impact (e.g. on costs and profit).

2.1.6 Manual (paper) and computer-based systems

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main features of manual and computer-based systems
- evaluate the usefulness of paper and computer-based systems in particular contexts.

Examples/guidance

Systems will include paper versus computer-based filing, archiving and retrieval systems.

2.1.7 Procedures for checking internal and external business communications

Candidates must be able to:

- check business documents for errors and correct them
- assess the benefits and drawbacks of checking business communications for errors
- assess the impact on business organisations of a failure in communication.

Examples/guidance

Errors to be checked will include spelling and punctuation.

2.1.8 Input devices

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main features of input devices
- evaluate the usefulness of specified input devices in a given scenario.

Examples/guidance

Devices include:

- QWERTY and concept keyboards
- touch-screen devices
- mice
- joysticks
- scanners (including barcode readers and OCR devices)
- digital cameras (including webcams)
- voice recognition.

2.1.9 Computing devices

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main features of computing devices
- evaluate the usefulness of computing devices in a given scenario.

Examples/guidance

Computing devices include:

- desktop computers (including network workstations)
- portable computers (including laptops/netbooks and handheld devices such as PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) and smartphones)
- EPOS (Electronic Point of Sale) devices.

2.1.10 Output devices

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main features of output devices
- evaluate the usefulness of output devices in a given scenario.

Examples/guidance

Output devices include:

- monitors
- printers
- data projectors
- speakers.

2.1.11 Storage devices

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main features of storage devices
- analyse the benefits and drawbacks of storage devices
- evaluate the usefulness of storage devices in a given scenario.

Examples/guidance

Storage devices include:

- hard disks (internal and external)
- CDs (ROM, R and RW)
- DVDs (ROM, R and RW)
- portable flash drives (e.g. USB memory sticks and memory cards)
- magnetic tape
- remote storage (e.g. web-based file storage services).

2.1.12 Back-up systems

Candidates must be able to:

- describe how and why computer data should be backed up
- analyse the benefits and drawbacks of backing up computer data
- evaluate the effectiveness of back-up methods and systems in a given context.

Examples/guidance

Relevant issues include:

- frequency of making back-up copies of data
- the choice of back-up media
- the location of back-up storage media.

2.1.13 Data security

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main measures available to protect computer systems
- evaluate the usefulness of protection measures in a given scenario.

Examples/guidance

Data security measures include:

- software:
 - firewalls
 - anti-virus
 - anti-spam
 - anti-spyware
 - encryption.
- permissions:
 - usernames and passwords
 - access rights.
- physical access:
 - locked rooms
 - alarm systems.

2.1.14 Systems to support e-commerce

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the systems needed to create, distribute, view and interact with web pages
- analyse the benefits and drawbacks to business organisations and customers of e-commerce
- assess the impact of e-commerce on business organisations and their customers.

Examples/guidance

- The understanding of the systems requirements for e-commerce should include situations where the business hosts its own website, as well as the role of hosting services.
- Drawbacks should include data security issues and the measures needed to overcome them.

2.2 Unit A266: *Developing business communication systems*

In this unit candidates will explore and suggest improvements to business communication systems, considering the impact on the business and its stakeholders.

This specification has been written to reflect the technologies which it is expected will be used by business organisations over the next few years. The technologies listed in the examples/guidance are not exhaustive however, and some may be superseded by those which emerge during the life of the qualification.

2.2.1 Business communication systems

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main elements of common business communication systems
- assess the usefulness of commonly used business communication systems and make suggestions for improvement.

Examples/guidance

Candidates should understand that systems consist of the following elements:

- purpose, e.g. to communicate information
- medium, e.g. paper, electronic
- hardware, e.g. input, output devices
- software, e.g. operating systems, applications software
- data storage – electronic or paper.

Candidates are not expected to have a detailed knowledge of these components.

Candidates are expected to be able to describe a broad range of commonly used systems. These include those typically found in organisations such as schools and profit-seeking businesses, for example:

- systems based on office computers and software, including portable computing devices
- communication systems based on verbal, phone and video technology, e.g. meetings and conferences (including video-conferencing).

2.2.2 Business communication

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main purposes of business communication
- describe the main methods of business communication
- describe the features of the media used by business organisations to communicate information
- assess the benefits and drawbacks of the media for business communications
- select and justify appropriate methods and media for business communications.

Examples/guidance

- to transmit, receive and exchange information and ideas
- verbal/written/visual, internal/external, private/public
- internal: memos, emails, notice boards, company newsletters, reports, meetings, intranet
- external: letters (including mailmerge), flyers, leaflets, brochures, internet and email.

2.2.3 The role of business communication systems in the success or failure of organisations

Candidates must be able to:

- assess the impact on business organisations of effective or ineffective communication systems.

Examples/guidance

Candidates must be able to assess the impact on business organisations of both existing and proposed communication systems.

2.2.4 Computing devices

Candidates must be able to:

- identify the main types of stakeholder
- describe the main interests of selected stakeholders
- analyse how the interests of selected stakeholders may conflict with each other and the business organisation
- assess the impact of business activity on stakeholders.

Examples/guidance

Candidates must consider the impact on various stakeholders of an organisation's existing and proposed business communication systems.

Examples of stakeholders include:

- owners/management
- employees
- customers
- suppliers.

2.2.5 Output devices

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main features of communication devices
- evaluate the usefulness of communication devices in a given scenario.

Examples/guidance

Communication devices include:

- mobile phones (including web-enabled phones and devices with phone and/or email capability, e.g. PDAs and 'Blackberrys')
- fax
- video conferencing
- satellite navigation systems (e.g. in-car)
- radio-frequency identification (RFID) systems.

2.2.6 Storage devices

Candidates must be able to:

- describe factors affecting the effectiveness of ICT-based systems
- evaluate ICT-based systems from different perspectives.

Examples/guidance

Relevant factors include:

- cost (start-up and operating)
- ease of use
- fitness for purpose
- security
- health and safety
- environmental sustainability.

2.2.7 Changing business communication systems

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the actions which need to be taken to develop and improve business communication systems
- assess the impact on business organisations and employees of changes to business communication systems.

Examples/guidance

Actions include:

- planning improvements (including setting objectives) and producing an action plan
- implementing improvements (including testing and refining)
- evaluation of impact.

Candidates should understand that this is a continuous cycle.

Impact includes:

- cost
- training implications
- changing job roles, e.g. re-skilling, multi-tasking, responsible for own administration and document production
- changing working practices, e.g. home-based working, working while travelling/away from office, videoconferencing
- redundancies/new employment opportunities.

2.2.8 Documents to support a proposal for a new business communication system

Candidates must be able to:

- produce a formal business report using ICT
- produce a document for a group of stakeholders to secure their support for the business proposal.

Examples/guidance

Formal business report to include:

- introduction
- terms of reference
- evidence
- recommendations
- conclusions.

Report to incorporate, as appropriate:

- text
- graphics
- images
- graphs
- charts
- tables.

Document types to include:

- slide-show presentation
- intranet web page(s)
- letter
- leaflet.

2.3 Unit A267: ICT skills for business communication systems

In this unit candidates will develop the knowledge, understanding and practical skills needed to maintain and use business communication systems based on standard office software.

This specification has been written to reflect the technologies which it is expected will be used by business organisations over the next few years. The technologies listed in the examples/guidance are not exhaustive however, and some may be superseded by those which emerge during the life of the qualification.

2.3.1 Word processing/desktop publishing/presentation software

Candidates must be able to:

- recall files
- enter, organise, create, refine and format information using fully blocked style and open punctuation
- apply editing techniques, using templates, to create and print professional documents in a variety of formats including:
 - business letter (including mail merge)
 - memorandum
 - notice of meeting and agenda
 - training/conference programme
 - flyer/leaflet
 - business report
 - slide-show presentation
- incorporate text, tables, mailmerged fields, graphics and images (including charts and graphs) where appropriate.

2.3.2 Storage devices

Candidates must be able to:

- use an existing single worksheet in order to solve business problems
- recall files, edit (including delete, insert data, cells, rows and columns) and print
- insert, edit and replicate appropriate functions and formulae, including absolute and relative cell referencing
- use appropriate formatting
- create and develop appropriate charts and graphs, using suitable labels
- use an existing spreadsheet as a datasource in a mailmerge.

2.3.3 Database software

Candidates must be able to:

- use an existing flat-file database in order to solve business problems
- recall files, enter, organise, select, delete and edit records using field names and headings, data types and unique record identifier, when appropriate, and print
- create queries to search for specified data using single and multiple criteria
- sort records on one or more fields in ascending or descending order
- create reports based upon the results of queries
- use an existing database as a datasource in a mailmerge.

2.3.4 Graphics software

Candidates must be able to:

- recall files, select, size, crop and position images which are fit for purpose
- insert edited images into final document and print.

2.3.5 Software

Candidates must be able to:

- describe the main features of software
- assess the benefits and drawbacks of specified software
- evaluate the usefulness of software in a given scenario.

Examples/guidance

Software will include that used in Unit A266 and above, plus:

- email systems
- web-browsers
- project-planning software
- diary-management software
- Web 2.0 applications, e.g. wikis and blogs
- web creation software.

Evaluation to include:

- the choice of open source or proprietary software
- location of software, e.g. stored on local server or accessed via the internet
- extent to which software supports collaboration and team working.

3 Assessment of GCSE Business and Communication Systems

3.1 Overview of the assessment in GCSE Business and Communication Systems

For GCSE Business and Communication Systems candidates must take **all** three units.

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Unit A265: *Businesses and their communication systems*

50% of the total GCSE	Candidates answer all questions.
1 hour 30 mins written paper	This unit is externally assessed.
90 marks	

Unit A266: *Developing business communication systems*

25% of the total GCSE	Candidates choose one scenario from a choice of two.
Controlled assessment	Candidates complete the set tasks and activities.
60 marks	It is recommended that up to ten hours are spent on research and up to five hours on writing up.
	For guidance on the total length of each candidate's controlled assessment evidence see section 4.2.
	A new set of controlled assessment materials is issued each year.
	This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Unit A267: *ICT skills for business communication systems*

25% of the total GCSE	This examination has two tasks.
1 hour practical examination	Candidates complete both tasks.
60 marks	This unit is externally assessed.

3.2 Assessment objectives (AOs)

Candidates are expected to demonstrate their ability to:

AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology.
AO2	Apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks.
AO3	Analyse and evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present appropriate conclusions.

3.2.1 AO weightings – GCSE Business and Communication Systems

Unit	% of GCSE			Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	
Unit A265: <i>Businesses and their communication systems</i>	20%	15%	15%	50%
Unit A266: <i>Developing business communication systems</i>	5%	10%	10%	25%
Unit A267: <i>ICT skills for business communication systems</i>	10%	10%	5%	25%
Total	35%	35%	30%	100%

3.3 Grading and awarding grades

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.

Most GCSEs are unitised schemes. 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 may have been set, and between different units. OCR uses a Uniform Mark Scale to enable this to be done.

A candidate's uniform mark for each unit is calculated from the candidate's raw mark on that unit. 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	
25%	60	54	48	42	36	30	24	18	12	0
50%	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0

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

Qualification	Max Uniform Mark	Qualification Grade								U
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
GCSE	240	216	192	168	144	120	96	72	48	0

The written papers/external examinations will have a total weighting of 75% and controlled assessment a weighting of 25%.

A candidate's uniform 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.

3.4 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.

3.4.1 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.

3.4.2 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.

3.4.3 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.

3.5 Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is assessed in units A265 and A266 and is integrated within the marking criteria. Questions in which quality of written communication is to be assessed will be indicated on the question paper with an asterisk (*).

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.

4 Controlled assessment in GCSE Business and Communication Systems

This section provides general guidance on controlled assessment: what controlled assessment tasks are, when and how they are available; how to plan and manage controlled assessment and what controls must be applied throughout the process. More support can be found on the [OCR website](#).

Teaching and Learning

Controlled assessment is designed to be an integral part of teaching and learning. Activities which develop skills take place regularly in the classroom, using a variety of appropriate resources (as chosen by the teacher). These opportunities allow candidates to practise a wide range of tasks, and teachers can discuss and comment on performance as appropriate. There are no restrictions regarding time or feedback to individual learners.

When all necessary teaching and learning has taken place and teachers feel that candidates are ready for assessment, candidates can be given the appropriate controlled assessment task.

4.1 Controlled assessment tasks

All controlled assessment tasks are set by OCR.

Candidates choose one scenario from a choice of two and complete the set tasks and activities for that scenario.

Live OCR controlled assessment material must **NOT** be used as practice material. Centres should devise their own practice material or use the specimen controlled assessment material.

Controlled assessment tasks will be available on Interchange from 1 June for the following academic year and will be replaced each year. Guidance on how to access controlled assessment tasks from Interchange is available on the [OCR website](#).

Centres must ensure that candidates undertake a task applicable to the correct year of the examination by checking carefully the examination dates of the tasks on Interchange.

4.2 Planning and managing controlled assessment

Controlled assessment tasks are available at an early stage to allow planning time. It is anticipated that candidates will spend a total of about 15 hours in producing the work for this unit. Candidates should be allowed sufficient time to complete the tasks.

Suggested steps and timings are included below, with guidance on regulatory controls at each step of the process. Teachers must ensure that the control requirements indicated below are met throughout the process.

4.2.1 Preparation and research time

Preparation (informal supervision)

Informal supervision ensures that the work of the individual candidates is recorded accurately and that plagiarism does not take place. Assessable outcomes may be informed by group work, but must be an individual response.

- Introduction to the task (teacher led)

Includes choice of tasks, possible approaches and sources of evidence, time allocations, programmes of work and deadlines, methods of working, control requirements.

Research (limited supervision)

Limited supervision means that candidates can undertake this part of the process without direct teacher supervision and outside the centre as required. Candidates are also able to work in collaboration during this stage. However, when producing their final piece of work, candidates must complete and/or evidence all work individually.

- Research/collection of evidence: **10 hours**

During the research phase candidates can be given support and guidance.

Teachers **can**:

- explain the task
- advise on how the task could be approached
- advise on resources
- alert the candidate to key things that must be included in the final piece of work.

Teachers **must not**:

- comment on or correct the work
- practise the task with the candidates
- provide templates, model answers or feedback on drafts.

Research material can include fieldwork, internet- or paper-based research, questionnaires, audio and video files etc. 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.

4.2.2 Producing the final piece of work

Producing the final piece of work (formal supervision)

Formal supervision means under direct teacher supervision: teachers must be able to authenticate the work and there must be acknowledgement and referencing of any sources used. If writing up is carried out over several sessions, work must be collected in between sessions.

- Production of final piece of work: **5 hours**
- The final piece of work should be about **2000 words** in total. Headings included within the body of the materials presented by the candidate should be included in the word count, but footnotes, figures, tables, diagrams, charts and appendices should not be included.

When supervising tasks, teachers are expected to:

- 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.

Candidates must work independently to produce their own final piece of work.

4.2.3 Presentation of the final piece of work

Candidates must observe the following procedures when producing their final piece of work for the controlled assessment tasks:

- 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 in digital format (CD or online) for moderation or marking must be in a suitable file structure as detailed in Appendix A at the end of this specification. Work submitted on paper must be secured by treasury tags.

4.3 Marking and moderating controlled assessment

All controlled assessment units are marked by the centre assessor(s) using OCR marking criteria and guidance and are moderated by the OCR-appointed moderator. External moderation is either e-moderation where evidence in a digital format is supplied or postal moderation.

4.3.1 Applying the marking criteria

The starting point for marking the tasks is the marking criteria (see section 4.3.4 *Marking criteria for controlled assessment tasks*). The criteria identify levels of performance 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.

4.3.2 Use of 'best fit' approach to marking criteria

The assessment task(s) for each unit should be marked by teachers according to the given marking criteria within the relevant unit using a 'best fit' approach. For each of the assessment criteria, teachers select one of the three band descriptors provided in the marking grid that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked.

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 band descriptor that best describes the work of the candidate.

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

- where the candidate's work *convincingly* meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- where the candidate's work *adequately* meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the candidate's work *just* meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

Teachers should use the full range of marks available to them and 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'. Where there are only two marks within a band the choice will be between work which, in most respects, meets the statement and work which just meets the statement. For wider mark bands the marks on either side of the middle mark(s) for 'adequately met' should be used where the standard is lower or higher than 'adequate' but **not** the highest or lowest mark in the band.

Only one mark per assessment objective/criteria will be entered. The final mark for the candidate for the controlled assessment unit is out of a total of 60 and is found by totalling the marks for each of the marking objective/criteria strands.

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced. If a candidate submits no work for the internally assessed unit, then the candidate should be indicated as being absent from that unit. If a candidate completes any work at all for an internally assessed unit, then the work should be assessed according to the marking criteria and the appropriate mark awarded, which may be zero.

4.3.3 Annotation of candidates' work

Each piece of internally assessed work should show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria.

The writing of comments on candidates' work, and coversheet, provides a means of communication between teachers during the internal standardisation and with the moderator if the work forms part of the moderation sample.

4.3.4 Marking criteria for controlled assessment tasks

Task 1 (45 marks)

AO1 – 9 marks

AO2 – 18 marks

AO3 – 18 marks

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
Activity (a)	Some limited features of the communications system(s) are identified. [1 2]	Some of the main features of the communications system(s) are clearly described. [3 4]	The main features of the communications system(s) are described in detail. [5 6]
Activity (b)	A few limited messages and media which the organisation uses are identified. [1 2]	Some of the main messages and media which the organisation uses are clearly described. [3 4]	The main messages and media which the organisation uses are described in detail. [5 6]
Activity (c)	A few limited capabilities and limitations of the existing systems used are described. [1 2]	Some of the main capabilities and limitations of the existing systems used are briefly analysed. [3 4]	The main capabilities and limitations of the existing systems used are analysed in detail. [5 6]
Activity (d)	Some opinions of relevant stakeholders and their recommendations for improvement are identified. Some limited reasons for the improvements are given. [1 2]	The opinions of relevant stakeholders and their recommendations for improvement are described. Some clear reasons for the improvements are briefly analysed. [3 4]	The opinions of relevant stakeholders and their recommendations for improvement are described in detail. Reasons for the improvements are analysed in detail. [5 6]
Activity (e)	A few limited recommendations for improvements in the way in which communication takes place are identified and briefly described. [1 2]	Recommendations for improvements in the way in which communication takes place are analysed in brief with some limited justification. [3 4]	Recommendations for improvements in the way in which communication takes place are analysed in detail and comprehensively justified. [5 6]
Activity (f)	Some limited impact of the recommended changes is identified and briefly described. [1 2 3]	The impact of the recommended changes is clearly identified and analysed in brief with some limited assessment of the overall impact. [4 5 6]	The overall impact of the recommended changes is analysed and assessed in detail. [7 8 9]

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

Report *	<p>A report which is of basic quality. ICT is used with basic competence, with some limited use of formatting, charts, graphs, images, tables and a bibliography. To be of a useable standard the report would require significant improvements to organisation, structure, spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[1 2]</p>	<p>A report which is of below professional quality. ICT is used competently, with some effective use of formatting, charts, graphs, images, tables and a bibliography. To be of a useable standard the report would require only minor improvements to some of the organisation, structure, spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[3 4]</p>	<p>A report which is near professional quality. ICT is used to a high standard with effective use of formatting, charts, graphs, images, tables and a bibliography. The report is of a useable standard or to become so would only require a very few minor amendments to the organisation, structure, spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[5 6]</p>
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0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

* Quality of written communication is assessed

Task 2 (15 marks)

AO1 – 3 marks

AO2 – 6 marks

AO3 – 6 marks

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
Content	The proposals are briefly summarised. Some benefits to the specified stakeholder are identified. There is a limited and only partially successful attempt to 'sell' the proposals to the stakeholder. [1 2 3]	The proposals are clearly summarised. A range of ways in which the specified stakeholder group will benefit from the proposals are clearly described. There is a clear and largely successful attempt to 'sell' the proposals to the stakeholder. [4 5 6]	The proposals are summarised effectively. A comprehensive range of ways in which the specified stakeholder group will benefit from the proposals are described in detail. There is a successful attempt to 'sell' the proposals to the stakeholder. [7 8 9]
Document *	A basic quality document which is of below-professional quality due to obvious errors of content and communication. To be of a useable standard the document would require significant improvements to organisation, structure, spelling, punctuation and grammar. [1 2]	A good quality document which is of below-professional quality due to occasional errors of content and communication. To be of a useable standard the document would require only minor improvements to some of the organisation, structure, spelling, punctuation and grammar. [3 4]	A high quality document which is of near-professional quality. The document is of a useable standard or to become so would only require a very few minor amendments to the organisation, structure, spelling, punctuation and grammar. [5 6]

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

* Quality of written communication is assessed

4.3.5 Authentication of work

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 teachers 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 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 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 rewards from acknowledging sources, and the credit they will gain from doing so, should be emphasised to candidates as well as the potential risks of failing to acknowledge such material. Candidates may be asked to 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 evidence produced by candidates is authentic. The Centre Authentication Form includes a declaration for assessors to sign and is available from the [OCR website](#) and [OCR Interchange](#).

4.3.6 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.

4.3.7 Moderation

All work for controlled assessment 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 defined in section 4.3.4 pp 24-26.

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

4.4 Submitting the moderation samples via the OCR Repository

The OCR Repository is a secure website for centres to upload candidate work and for assessors to access this work digitally. Centres can use the OCR Repository for uploading marked candidate work for moderation.

Centres can access the OCR Repository via OCR Interchange, find their candidate entries in their area of the Repository, and use the Repository to upload files (singly or in bulk) for access by their moderator.

The OCR Repository allows candidates to send evidence in electronic file types that would normally be difficult to submit through postal moderation; for example multimedia or other interactive unit submissions.

The OCR GCSE Business and Communication Systems unit A266 can be submitted electronically to the OCR Repository via Interchange: please check Section 7.4.1 page 33 for unit entry codes for the OCR Repository.

There are three ways to load files to the OCR Repository:

- 1 Centres can load multiple files against multiple candidates by clicking on 'Upload candidate files' in the Candidates tab of the Candidate Overview screen.
- 2 Centres can load multiple files against a specific candidate by clicking on 'Upload files' in the Candidate Details screen.
- 3 Centres can load multiple administration files by clicking on 'Upload admin files' in the Administration tab of the Candidate Overview screen.

The OCR Repository is seen as a faster, greener and more convenient means of providing work for assessment. It is part of a wider programme bringing digital technology to the assessment process, the aim of which is to provide simpler and easier administration for centres.

Instructions for how to upload files to OCR using the OCR Repository can be found on OCR [Interchange](#).

5.1 Free resources available from the OCR website

The following materials will be available on the OCR website:

- GCSE Business and Communication Systems specification
- [specimen assessment materials for each unit](#)
- [Guide to controlled assessment](#)
- [Teachers' Handbook](#)
- [sample schemes of work and lesson plans](#)

5.2 Other resources

OCR offers centres a wealth of high quality published support with a choice of 'Official Publisher Partner' and 'Approved Publication' resources, all endorsed by OCR for use with OCR specifications.

5.2.1 Publisher partners

OCR works in close collaboration with publisher partners to ensure you have access to:

- published support materials available when you need them, tailored to OCR specifications
- high quality resources produced in consultation with OCR subject teams, which are linked to OCR's teacher support materials.



Hodder Education is the publisher partner for OCR GCSE Business and Communication Systems.

Hodder Education produces the following resources for OCR GCSE Business and Communication Systems:

- *OCR Business & Communication Systems for GCSE*, Colin Harber Stuart, Nina Rees (ISBN 9780340984437).

5.2.2 Endorsed publications

OCR endorses a range of publisher materials to provide quality support for centres delivering its qualifications. You can be confident that materials branded with OCR's 'Official Publishing Partner' or 'Approved publication' logos have undergone a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. All responsibility for the content of the publisher's materials rests with the publisher.



These endorsements do not mean that the materials are the only suitable resources available or necessary to achieve an OCR qualification.

5.3 Training

OCR will offer a range of support activities for all practitioners throughout the lifetime of the qualification to ensure they have the relevant knowledge and skills to deliver the qualification.

Please see [Event Booker](#) for further information.

5.4 OCR support services

5.4.1 Active Results

Active Results is available to all centres offering OCR's GCSE Business and Communication Systems specifications.



Active Results is a free results analysis service to help teachers review the performance of individual candidates or whole schools.

Data can be analysed using filters on several categories such as gender and other demographic information, as well as providing breakdowns of results by question and topic.

Active Results allows you to look in greater detail at your results:

- richer and more granular data will be made available to centres including question level data available from e-marking
- you can identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual candidates and your centre's cohort as a whole
- our systems have been developed in close consultation with teachers so that the technology delivers what you need.

Further information on Active Results can be found on the OCR website.

5.4.2 OCR Interchange

OCR Interchange has been developed to help you to carry out day-to-day administration functions online, quickly and easily. The site allows you to register and enter candidates online. In addition, you can gain immediate and free access to candidate information at your convenience. Sign up on the [OCR website](#).

6.1 Equality Act information relating to GCSE Business and Communication Systems

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 qualification and subject criteria were reviewed by the regulators in order 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 *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration* 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 Ofqual's GCSE subject criteria equalities review and are as follows:

	Yes/No	Type of Assessment
Readers	Yes	All written examinations
Scribes	Yes	All written examinations
Practical assistants	Yes	All written examinations
Word processors	Yes	All written examinations
Transcripts	Yes	All written examinations
Oral language modifiers	Yes	All written examinations
BSL signers	Yes	All written examinations
Modified question papers	Yes	All written examinations
Extra time	Yes	All written examinations

6.2 Arrangements for candidates with particular requirements (including Special Consideration)

All candidates with a demonstrable need may be eligible for access arrangements to enable them to show what they know and can do. The criteria for eligibility for access arrangements can be found in the JCQ document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*.

Candidates who have been fully prepared for the assessment but who have been affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control at the time of the examination may be eligible for special consideration. As above, centres should consult the JCQ document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*.

7 Administration of GCSE Business and Communication Systems

In December 2011 the GCSE qualification criteria were changed by Ofqual. As a result, all GCSE qualifications have been updated to comply with the new regulations.

The most significant change for all GCSE qualifications is that, from 2014, unitised specifications must require that 100% of the assessment is terminal.

Please note that there are no changes to the terminal rule and re-sit rules for the January 2013 and June 2013 examination series:

- at least 40% of the assessment must be taken in the examination series in which the qualification is certificated
- candidates may re-sit each unit once before certification, i.e. each candidate can have two attempts at a unit before certification.

For full information on the assessment availability and rules that apply in the January 2013 and June 2013 examination series, please refer to the previous version of this specification [GCSE Business and Communication Systems \(July 2009\)](#) available on the website.

The sections below explain in more detail the rules that apply from the June 2014 examination series onwards.

7.1 Availability of assessment from 2014

There is one examination series available each year in June (all units are available each year in June).

GCSE Business and Communication Systems certification is available in June 2014 and each June thereafter.

	Unit A265	Unit A266	Unit A267	Certification availability
June 2014	✓	✓	✓	✓
June 2015	✓	✓	✓	✓

7.2 Certification rules

For GCSE Business and Communication Systems, from June 2014 onwards, a 100% terminal rule applies. Candidates must enter for all their units in the series in which the qualification is certificated.

7.3 Rules for re-taking a qualification

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

Where a candidate re-takes a qualification, **all** units must be re-entered and all externally assessed units must be re-taken in the same series as the qualification is re-certificated. The new results for these units will be used to calculate the new qualification grade. Any results previously achieved cannot be re-used.

For each of the controlled assessment units, candidates who are re-taking a qualification can choose either to re-take that controlled assessment unit or to carry forward the result for that unit that was used towards the previous certification of the same qualification.

- Where a candidate decides to re-take the controlled assessment, the new result will be the one used to calculate the new qualification grade. Any results previously achieved cannot be re-used.
- Where a candidate decides to carry forward a result for controlled assessment, they must be entered for the controlled assessment unit in the re-take series using the entry code for the carry forward option (see section 7.4).

7.4 Making entries

7.4.1 Unit entries

Centres must be approved to offer OCR qualifications before they can make any entries, including estimated entries. It is recommended that centres apply to OCR to become an approved 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 administrative materials.

It is essential that correct unit entry codes are used when making unit entries.

For the controlled assessment unit, centres can decide whether they want to submit candidates' work for moderation through the OCR Repository or by post. Candidates submitting controlled assessment must be entered for the appropriate unit entry code from the table below. Candidates who are re-taking the qualification and who want to carry forward the controlled assessment should be entered using the unit entry code for the carry forward option.

Centres should note that controlled assessment tasks can still be completed at a time which is appropriate to the centre/candidate. However, where tasks change from year to year, centres would have to ensure that candidates had completed the correct task(s) for the year of entry.

Unit entry code	Component code	Assessment method	Unit titles
A265	01	Written paper	<i>Businesses and their communication systems</i>
A266	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Developing business communication systems</i>
A266	02	Moderated via postal moderation	<i>Developing business communication systems</i>
A266	80	Carried forward	<i>Developing business communication systems</i>
A267	01	Practical examination	<i>ICT skills for business communication systems</i>

7.4.2 Certification entries

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

Centres must enter candidates for:

- GCSE Business and Communication Systems certification code J230

7.5 Enquiries about results

Under certain circumstances, a centre may wish to query the result issued to one or more candidates. Enquiries about results for GCSE units must be made immediately following the series in which the relevant unit was taken and by the relevant enquiries about results deadline for that series.

Please refer to the JCQ *Post-Results Services* booklet and the OCR *Admin Guide: 14–19 Qualifications* for further guidance on enquiries about results and deadlines. Copies of the latest versions of these documents can be obtained from the OCR website at www.ocr.org.uk.

7.6 Prohibited qualifications and classification code

Every specification is assigned a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this specification is 7460.

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, 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, either from their centre or from the institution to which they wish to progress.

Other information about GCSE Business and Communication Systems

8

8.1 Overlap with other qualifications

There is a small amount of overlap between the content of this specification and the content of other GCSE business and business-related subject specifications.

8.2 Progression from this qualification

GCSE qualifications are general qualifications which enable candidates to progress either 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.

8.3 Avoidance of bias

OCR has taken great care in preparation of this specification and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. Special focus is given to the 9 strands of the Equality Act with the aim of ensuring both direct and indirect discrimination is avoided.

8.4 Regulatory requirements

This specification complies in all respects with the current: *General Conditions of Recognition; GCSE, GCE, Principal Learning and Project Code of Practice; GCSE Controlled Assessment regulations* and the GCSE subject criteria for GCSE business subjects. All documents are available on the [Ofqual website](#).

8.5 Language

This specification and associated assessment materials are in English only. Only answers written in English will be assessed.

8.6 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.

	Unit A265	Unit A266	Unit A267
Spiritual			
Moral	✓		
Ethical	✓		
Social	✓	✓	✓
Legislative	✓	✓	✓
Economic	✓	✓	✓
Cultural		✓	

There are no spiritual issues covered in this specification.

8.7 Sustainable development, health and safety considerations and European developments, consistent with international agreements

This specification supports these issues, consistent with current EU agreements, as outlined below.

Unit A265: The legal framework; manual (paper) and computer-based systems.

Unit A266: Capabilities and limitations of ICT-based systems.

8.8 Key Skills

This specification provides opportunities for the development of the Key Skills of *Communication*, *Application of Number*, *Information and Communication 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		ICT		WwO		IoLP		PS	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
A265					✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
A266	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A267	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

8.9 ICT

In order to play a full part in modern society, candidates need to be confident and effective users of ICT. This specification provides candidates with a wide range of appropriate opportunities to use ICT in order to further their study of Business and Communication Systems.

The assessment of this course requires candidates to:

- explore and suggest improvements to business communication systems, considering the impact on the business and its stakeholders
- develop the practical skills needed to maintain and use business communication systems based on standard office software
- develop a detailed understanding of business communication systems, including the main hardware and software components, and how these systems are operated
- gain a detailed understanding of these systems and develop their practical skills to become effective users of them.

8.10 Citizenship

From September 2002, the National Curriculum for England at Key Stage 4 includes 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 complement 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
2.1 Critical thinking and enquiry	
b	Research, plan and undertake enquiries into issues or problems, using a range of information, sources and methods
2.2 Advocacy and representation	
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
k	The study of citizenship should include the rights and responsibilities of consumers, employers and employees
4 Curriculum opportunities	
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: Guidance for the production of electronic controlled assessment

A

Structure for evidence

A controlled assessment portfolio is a collection of folders and files containing the candidate's evidence. 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 particular evidence is made clear by naming each file and folder appropriately and by use of an index called 'Home Page'.

There should be a top level folder detailing the candidate's centre number, candidate number, surname and forename, together with the unit code A266, so that the portfolio is clearly identified as the work of one candidate.

Each candidate produces an assignment for controlled assessment. The evidence should be contained within a separate folder within the portfolio. This folder may contain separate files.

Each candidate's controlled assessment portfolio should be stored in a secure area on the centre's 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 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**Movie formats for digital video evidence**

MPEG (*.mpg)

QuickTime movie (*.mov)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.aam)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.dcr)

Flash (*.swf)

Windows Media File (*.wmf)

MPEG Video Layer 4 (*.mp4)

Audio or sound formats

MPEG Audio Layer 3 (*.mp3)

Graphics formats including photographic evidence

JPEG (*.jpg)

Graphics file (*.pcx)

MS bitmap (*.bmp)

GIF images (*.gif)

Animation formats

Macromedia Flash (*.fla)

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)



YOUR CHECKLIST

Our aim is to provide you with all the information and support you need to deliver our specifications.

- Bookmark www.ocr.org.uk/gcse2012
- Be among the first to hear about support materials and resources as they become available. Register for email updates at www.ocr.org.uk/updates.
- Book your inset training place online at www.ocreventbooker.org.uk
- Learn more about active results at www.ocr.org.uk/activeresults
- Join our business and communications systems social network community for teachers at www.social.ocr.org.uk

NEED MORE HELP?

Here's how to contact us for specialist advice:

Phone: **01223 553998**

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

Online: <http://answers.ocr.org.uk>

Fax: **01223 552627**

Post: **Customer Contact Centre, OCR, Progress House,
Westwood Business Park, Coventry CV4 8JQ**

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Become an approved OCR centre – if your centre is completely new to OCR and has not previously used us for any examinations, visit www.ocr.org.uk/centreapproval to become an approved OCR centre.

Contact us

Keep up to date with the latest news by registering to receive e-alerts at www.ocr.org.uk/updates

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