

J230 GCSE Business and Communication Systems

General Questions

Who is the specification aimed at?

This specification is aimed at all candidates who wish to develop their understanding of business communication systems, the business environment, and apply their ICT skills and capability to this area.

Do I have to be a business teacher/ICT teacher?

While, as with any qualification, it is preferable that subject specialists deliver a course, this is not a formal requirement. However, teachers need to have a broad appreciation of how ICT is used in a business context.

How much 'business studies' is included in the new specification?

Candidates are required to show an understanding of the business context within which communication systems operate. Broadly speaking, candidates should have an awareness of how the aims of an organisation (profitability and other objectives) and its external environment (e.g. competition and customers) affect its actions. The specification provides details of the knowledge, understanding and skills required.

How much ICT is included in the new specification?

Candidates are required to be able to create and edit documents for a business purpose and audience. The scope and depth of coverage is broadly consistent with the Functional Skills requirements at Levels 1 and 2, in a business context.

Do my students need to have studied Key Stage 3 ICT before beginning this qualification?

It is not a requirement to have previously studied the National Curriculum Programme of Study for ICT at Key Stage 3. However, candidates beginning 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.

Is it OK to just look at communication systems which operate in my school?

While it is true that, in terms of complexity and scope, the systems in use in a typical school or college should enable the specification content to be covered, candidates should gain an understanding of how communication systems are used in a variety of profit and not-for profit organisations.

Do students need to know how to use industry standard software?

Students should be familiar by the end of this specification with the main software used in 'office' software such as Microsoft Office and Star Office. Candidates are not expected to use 'industry standard' software for applications such as Desk Top Publishing, HTML creation or multimedia applications (e.g. Flash). However, in order to gain an understanding of how ICT is used in business organisations centres may wish to explore other types of software applications and programs. This should not be to the detriment of the requirements of the external assessment of Unit A267: ICT Skills for business communication systems.

What are the main ICT skills which I need to teach?

Candidates should be able to create and edit documents which are used in a business context. These include memos, notice of meetings, agendas, leaflets, letters (including mail-merged), brochures, reports, spreadsheets (single worksheet), databases (flat-file), web-pages, and presentations. Candidates should be able to select and manipulate graphics. The scope and depth of ICT skills are consistent with Functional Skills in ICT at Levels 1 and 2. Details of the precise requirements are contained in the specification.

Unit Specific Questions**Unit A265: Businesses and their communication systems****Is this a compulsory unit?**

This unit is compulsory for a GCSE in Business and Communication Systems (J230).

What is this unit worth?

This unit is worth 50% of the GCSE in Business and Communication Systems.

What is the entry code for this unit?

The entry code for this unit is A265.

How is this unit assessed?

This unit is assessed through a 90 minute written examination paper. The examination is set and marked by OCR.

When is this unit available for assessment?

This unit is only available for assessment in June series.

Is the examination tiered?

No. All candidates take the same examination.

Will candidates be able to re-sit the unit?

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

Is there a text book for this unit?

Yes. The recommended text book is OCR Business and Communication Systems for GCSE published by Hodder. This book covers all three units of the GCSE in Business and Communication Systems (J230).

Is there training available for this unit?

Yes. OCR provides a full programme of training for Business and Communication Systems (J230). Details are available on the OCR website.

Unit A266: Developing business communication systems**Is this a compulsory unit?**

This unit is compulsory for a GCSE in Business and Communication Systems (J230).

What is this unit worth?

This unit is worth 25% of the GCSE in Business and Communication Systems.

What is the entry code for this unit?

The entry code for this unit is A266.

How is this unit assessed?

This unit is assessed through controlled assessment. Tasks are issued annually by OCR, marked by centres and moderated by OCR. For more details of this assessment please see the Guide to Controlled Assessment in GCSE Business and Communication Systems.

When is this unit available for assessment?

This unit is only available for assessment in June series.

Is the unit tiered?

No. All candidates use the same controlled assessment tasks.

Will candidates be able to re-sit the unit?

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

Is there a text book for this unit?

Yes. The recommended text book is OCR Business and Communication Systems for GCSE published by Hodder. This book covers all three units of the GCSE in Business and Communication Systems (J230).

Is there training available for this unit?

Yes. OCR provides a full programme of training for Business and Communication Systems (J230). Details are available on the OCR website.

What is 'controlled' in the controlled assessment?

Broadly speaking, OCR controls the tasks carried out by candidates and the conditions under which the tasks are taken as well as the external moderation of marked work. Centres are responsible for administering the assessments, ensuring the controlled conditions are met, then for marking and internally moderating the completed assessments. Candidates must complete the tasks under controlled conditions (e.g. restricted interaction with other candidates, no access to external sources of information other than their own research notes) but are free to undertake research under less restricted controlled conditions. Further details are available in the Guide to Controlled Assessment in GCSE Business and Communication Systems.

When will the Controlled Assessment tasks be issued to centres?

There will be a new set of controlled assessments issued each year at the beginning of June through OCR Interchange.

When can I issue the Controlled Assessment tasks to my students?

The controlled assessment tasks can be issued to candidates at the centre's discretion, while remaining mindful of the requirements of controlled assessment.

Where can I obtain further details about the controlled assessment?

Details of the learning required for the controlled assessment unit are contained in the specification. For more details of this assessment please see the Guide to Controlled Assessment in GCSE Business and Communication Systems. Specimen controlled assignments and exemplar materials have been produced which are available on the OCR website.

Unit A267: ICT Skills for business communication systems**Is this a compulsory unit?**

This unit is compulsory for a GCSE in Business and Communication Systems (J230).

What is this unit worth?

This unit is worth 25% of the GCSE in Business and Communication Systems.

What is the entry code for this unit?

The entry code for this unit is A267.

How is this unit assessed?

This unit is assessed through a 60 minute practical ICT examination. It is a **timetabled** examination which is set and marked by OCR.

When is this unit available for assessment?

This unit is available for assessment in both January and June series.

Is the examination tiered?

No. All candidates take the same examination.

Will candidates be able to re-sit the unit?

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

Is there a text book for this unit?

Yes. The recommended text book is OCR Business and Communication Systems for GCSE published by Hodder. This book covers all three units of the GCSE in Business and Communication Systems (J230).

Is there training available for this unit?

Yes. OCR provides a full programme of training for Business and Communication Systems (J230). Details are available on the OCR website.

What software will candidates be tested on during the computer test for this unit?

The A267 practical examination will require candidates to create and edit documents using: Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint. Any files for the examination will be delivered to centres, based on centre entries, through OCR Interchange in a proprietary format (e.g. **.mdb** not **.csv**).

Where can I obtain further details of the practical examination for this unit?

Details of the learning required for the A267 practical ICT examination are contained in the specification. Guidance on the practical arrangements for this examination can be found on the J230 GCSE Business & Communication Systems pages of the OCR website. A specimen examination paper and exemplar materials have been produced which are also available on the OCR website.