# OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

# Vocational Qualifications (QCF, NVQ, NQF)

# Creative and Digital Media

Creative and Digital Media Competence Diploma Level 3 – **10323** (from 2012)

# OCR Report to Centres August 2015

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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**OCR REPORT TO CENTRES**

# Creative and Digital Media Competence Diploma Level 3 – 10323

**Overview:**

The Creative and Digital Media Diploma is one of OCR's verified qualifications and is the competence element in the Creative and Digital Media apprenticeship. It is a work-based qualification in which learners gather evidence from the workplace-based projects they are involved in. Assessors visit the workplace and use a range of assessment methods to confirm that the Level 3 competence standard has been achieved. The competence diploma is a substantial qualification that requires 71 credits, which equates to over 700 hours.

It is encouraging to find that there stability has developed across the qualification, established over the last year. This could be described as a year of consolidation, where a good number of Centres have started to build up valuable experience and understanding of the qualification, its structure and content.

Centres require qualified and occupationally competent assessors and internal verifiers if they are to be able carry out to the internal quality assurance processes. This is an essential requirement, though it is recognised that some Centres have difficulty in either recruiting or training suitable staff.

**General Comments**

The overall range of learner performance is very broad, from inspirational portfolios of professional quality work to others that rely too heavily on witness testimony and professional discussions. The storage of and access to learner work can be problematic at times, sometimes due to unforeseen technical difficulties. The standard of administration also varies, being significantly affected by how much experience the Centre has with NVQ and verified qualifications in general.

Delivery time-scales are typically 12-18 months. Centres need to manage their time-scales carefully to avoid the difficulties with collating and assessing evidence caused by congestion as completion dates approach. Experience has shown that this occurs when portfolios are being assembled quite late in the delivery of the qualification. This has been seen over the last year in some centres where, 9 or 10 months into delivery, the work in progress is still only in the region of 10-20% complete. Centres must ensure that learners' portfolios of evidence demonstrate a consistent level of rigour and robustness if the overall apprenticeship is to exhibit the validity and usefulness that will ensure it is valued by employers.

Centre records, including assessment cover sheets, are generally quite clear but opportunities for improvement in the mapping of the full range of available evidence continue to exist. In some centres, evidence of competence may be mapped for one unit and yet not mapped for other units where that same evidence would contribute to the assessment criteria. Sometimes evidence of unit achievement can appear to be quite thin in a particular unit and yet a broader look at the portfolio clearly shows that the evidence is in reality much more robust. It is confidently expected that assessors will improve on this aspect as they become more familiar with the content and expectations of the different units and gradually become better at recognising the additional mapping opportunities. One area where the assessment could be more rigorous is the internal quality assurance processes, for example ensuring that all of the required records and documents are duly signed and dated. In some cases, gaps were seen such that the audit trail was incomplete. The CPD status of the assessment team should also be regularly updated to confirm the relevant and up-to-date occupational competence of the staff involved.

Some Centres delivering this qualification have some excellent industry links and employer engagement. Some of these are at the forefront of creative industries and represent tremendous opportunities for learners. It must be recognised, however, that even in these cases learners are still required to produce a full range of evidence to support the optional units. On the other hand, some employers are known to struggle to find projects that provide opportunities to cover all of the assessment criteria. In some cases learners have either omitted selected criteria or merely written about how something could be achieved rather than provide evidence of their competence in actually completing the task In these cases, simulation activities are acceptable forms of evidence..

**Comments on Individual Units**

Mandatory units: These begin with Units 1-6, which have come through from the older Preparing to Work qualification. In many portfolios these tend to show a more academic approach; although, given the content, this is quite suitable. However, these units should also be supported by practical examples from the workplace environment. Unit 1 is a common starting point for delivery and it is often found to be quite weak at Level 3. This could be partly due to the fact that many learners, progressing from Level 2, have yet to develop their understanding sufficiently to meet the breadth and depth necessary for achievement at Level 3. Assessors need to be more aware of this, and may find it more productive to go back to this unit later in the course to help ensure that the standard can be achieved. This situation is less problematic with some of Units 2-6, especially in areas such as Professional Behaviour and Converging Technologies. Many learners demonstrate more engagement with the content of these, and their portfolios of evidence are markedly better. One area of weakness that needs addressing, however, is ensuring that, as with any qualification, learners reference the sources of their information. Optional units: These may be selected from a diverse range of digital and interactive media, together with specialised radio pathways and some options from costume, hair, make-up and set design/build. The evidence that learners provide in these optional units is quite mixed. Some Centres demonstrate a robust approach, providing a very wide range of samples and product evidence.,  Others, however, rely too much on witness statements or professional discussions to meet a high proportion (or even all) of the unit assessment criteria. This approach is unsuitable and needs to be reviewed if assessment decisions are to be agreed by the external verifier. Comments on some of the more popular optional units are described below.

Units 11 and 12 (to record and edit audio-visual journalistic material) These Units frequently include some high quality professional camera work and final outcomes. This is especially true where learners are working with employers on commercial projects. Centres are reminded that in these cases evidence of the contribution made by the individual learner must be clearly recognisable so that their work can be properly evaluated and the assessment can maintain its validity.

The interactive media units (25-28) continue to be the most popular, which is not too surprising, since their assessment criteria and unit content can be applied to a wide range of creative media work. This includes, for example, a range of graphics and animation projects for web, games and social media content. In general the portfolios of evidence tend to be quite strong, but centres are reminded of the continuing need to provide a good range of product evidence. This is where there are some opportunities for improvement, since the approach by some centres is still based too thinly on an assignment write-up or report. Given that this is workplace based competence, an academic style of approach is not a good match for the qualification.

One other example of a unit that can be very good is Unit 24 (Manage and Market own Freelance Services). In this unit the best portfolios are those which include the actual spreadsheet files for cash flows, invoices etc., together with social media networking for business contacts, using LinkedIn, for example. Weaker portfolios, on the other hand, can show a cursory approach to this unit whereby the evidence simply takes the form in the form of a report that explains 'how' to manage own freelance services rather than providing examples of actually 'doing' it.

The photographic units (40 and 41) show an unusually wide range of approaches. The stronger and more appropriate submissions take a professional approach across multiple photographic shoots. The photographic outcomes of many of these learners demonstrate good control of subject, background, lighting and camera settings.  Weaker approaches feature a one-off photo shoot without any significant other or wider participation in photographic work.  Given the substantial number of guided learning hours for the unit, this is not only unrealistic but clearly fails to provide sufficient evidence for achievement at Level 3.

In this qualification, assessors should only sign off a unit as complete when an appropriate Level 3 standard has been achieved. In some centres, a number of portfolios are of no more than a Level 2 standard, and this situation needs to be constantly monitored by both the assessor and internal verifier.

## Sector Update

Reforms to vocational qualifications have continued, and some changes to apprenticeship schemes are being introduced. At the time of writing, the Creative and Digital Media apprenticeship continues in its current form, although it is possible there may be changes over the forthcoming year. The OCR website will provide details of any planned changes, and Centres are advised to monitor this. External verifiers may also be able to provide information about any plans or developments.

In terms of vocational/sector practice, collaborative environments and online media for projects continue to grow in their features and popularity. This provides more and welcome opportunities for the collection and storage of digital forms of evidence.

Technological developments continue, and we have already started to see the introduction of 4k video cameras and editing in learners' work. This trend is expected to continue and it can be confirmed that it is acceptable to use even this updated technology to fulfil assessment criteria for appropriate units.

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