# Vocational Qualifications (QCF, NVQ, NQF)

# Creative iMedia

Creative iMedia Level 1 Award – **04304**

Creative iMedia Level 1 Certificate – **04305**

Creative iMedia Level 1 Diploma – **04306**

Creative iMedia Level 2 Award – **04307**

Creative iMedia Level 2 Certificate – **04308**

Creative iMedia Level 2 Diploma – **04309**

Creative iMedia Level 3 Award – **04310**

Creative iMedia Level 3 Certificate – **04311**

Creative iMedia Level 3 Diploma – **04312**

# OCR Report to Centres 2014 – 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

# Level 1–3 Creative iMedia 04304–04312

## Overview

The QCF Creative iMedia qualification has been available for a number of years although reforms to vocational qualifications have brought more significant change over the last year. As expected, due to the loss of performance points a large number of Centres have now transferred from this legacy QCF qualification to the new Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia. Consequently it is not surprising that the number of submissions has dropped significantly over the year although some Centres still deliver this qualification where the performance points are not a concern. Where more established Centres have continued to submit units for this qualification it is believed that a number have been completing the Certificate or Diploma that was started in previous years. These Centres have benefitted from their earlier experience and understanding of the standards for each unit.

The qualification is based on pass/fail, although re-submissions without having to complete a new assignment are allowed where additional evidence has been produced to meet the assessment criteria. The qualification features a best-fit philosophy although there must be some evidence for each and all of the assessment criteria.

Creative iMedia is an e-portfolio only submission qualification and, for this purpose, Centres should be using OCR MAPS. Exceptions to this are for prisons where external access to web based e-portfolios is not allowed. During the last year, MAPS has been re-developed with performance improvements and a completely re-designed user interface which will be used across a wider range of OCR qualifications in future.

## General Comments

The qualification is available at Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3. At each level there is an Award, Certificate and Diploma. Mandatory units are found in the Certificate (Unit 101/201/301) and the Diploma (which requires a second mandatory unit 102/202/302).

The Level 1 qualifications are still being delivered widely in prisons and some adult education Centres. At this level there is a tendency for writing frames and templates to be used quite broadly which can introduce problems and restrict some of the individuality in the evidence being produced. An example here is with the research aspects of LO1 where, on occasions, the guidance provided by the Centre is not always a good match for the assessment criteria.

Very few submissions for the Level 2 qualifications have been seen over the last year. Historically the Certificate has been the mainstream qualification for schools that have delivered the qualification, however the loss of performance points has meant there has been a move to alternative options for media qualifications such as the Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia and/or GCSE media. Where submissions have been seen, they have typically been quite robust in the evidence being generated and submitted. The exception to this is with some Centres that have migrated their learners from Level 1 up to Level 2 versions of Creative iMedia and not adequately modified their approach or evidenced requirements to satisfy the best-fit philosophy for a Level 2 piece of work.

Notable types of Centre completing the Level 3 Certificate are those who are delivering the apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media. In these cases the Certificate for Creative iMedia is the mandatory knowledge based qualification that forms part of the overall apprenticeship. Here the approach to evidencing the units has been quite variable. Many submissions take a more standard approach that is typical of a college based delivery. However, other submissions are much more based around industry/vocational practice and, at times, merged with workplace projects. Unfortunately this is not always suitable, as assignment work must be completed under supervised conditions to ensure the authenticity and validity of the evidence.

Across all three Levels some submissions are still being seen where the final work in its intended format is not being supplied for external moderation. This is a fundamental piece of evidence in most units. As examples, the creation of digital graphics with just screenshots inserted into a write up cannot confirm that the properties of the graphic in terms of pixel dimensions and dpi resolution ensure that the work is fit for purpose. On occasions, websites and interactive media products are also evidenced just in the form of screenshots but in these cases it is not possible to check the user interactivity and navigation. A general rule would be to submit the same files and outcomes for external moderation that would be supplied to a client in a commercial/vocational context.

One issue that continues to cause difficulties for the examiner moderator is that Centre devised briefs are not always supplied or clear in the work submitted. This makes it difficult to confirm that the final work actually meets the assignment brief, which is important to ensure the assessment criteria in LO3 are met. Centres should ensure that copies of the assignment briefs are always submitted with the learner's work.

Holistic approaches that cover multiple units are seen in a small number of submissions. This has introduced some problems with ensuring the assessment criteria for each and every unit are adequately met. One example would be a video project for units 301, 302 and 314v. If the pre-production planning is thorough then it has been seen that the project evidence can meet 301 and 314v. And, on a positive note, many of these videos for 314v benefit from the extensive planning and are typically high quality outcomes. However, in these instances, the evidence for unit 302 tends to be very limited where still images, sound and video clips are only being prepared for use in the final video. This does not address the intention or assessment criteria of the unit, which is about the re-purposing of digital media assets into multiple formats for very different purposes.

A fairly common weakness is in the consideration of legal issues in the Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications. In order to meet the assessment criteria, the information on legal issues needs to be applied to the assignment brief and to the creative media work that is to be created. Merely quoting generic information on copyright does not adequately meet this requirement. A further issue with this and many aspects of research for LO1 in all the units is the referencing and acknowledgment of sources that are used. As seen with previous years, this is still a problem at times and it must be clear what is the learner's own knowledge and understanding, which is what contributes towards meeting the assessment criteria.

Internal moderation/standardisation within a Centre is rarely evidenced or demonstrated although it is a requirement of the qualification. Centres must be clear that in order to pass any unit there must be some evidence for every assessment criteria and that, overall, a best-fit philosophy is met for the Level being claimed.

*OCR Report to Centres 2014 – 2015*

## Comments on Individual Units

### Mandatory units:

In order to achieve the Award at any Level, no mandatory unit is needed. For the Certificate, one mandatory unit is required which is Unit 101/201/301. In this respect, the mandatory unit must always be achieved at the level of the final qualification. For the Diploma, a second mandatory unit is required which is Unit 102/202/302.

Overall the Pre-production Unit 101/201/301 is typically quite well done. The concepts of pre-production appear to be well established and the creation of the four document types is usually appropriate. One area to monitor is the research into the purpose and uses of visualisation diagrams. Occasionally, learners are using web sources to obtain their definitions but these are not always in a media context. Incorrect examples may have references to psychological visualisations or numerical solutions using mathematical analysis. In some cases, one or more of the pre-production documents has been weaker than would be expected for the Level of submission. Storyboards have been a good example of this and, at times, very short and simplistic documents have been submitted for Level 2 and sometimes even Level 3. The Centre devised brief is important here so that there is the opportunity to create a suitable type of document. If the main scenario is for a film then the storyboard requirement is straightforward, but the use of a visualisation diagram requires more consideration. An example of a suitable use would be perhaps a DVD cover for the film ie a static image media product, but a layout diagram for the film set is not suitable to meet the assessment criteria.

The work for this mandatory pre-production unit can be (and often is) evidenced by just write-ups and reports, although it is encouraged that the actual pre-production documents are always supplied. This unit can be delivered more holistically alongside a number of optional units. However the evidence must be specific and submitted separately. As mentioned in the general comments section of this report a number of issues have been seen where one set of evidence is submitted for a project, which is then used to claim multiple units. The evidence tends to be weak in one or more places and units, especially in terms of the planning and review sections. This approach always demands more scrutiny on the part of the Centre based assessor to ensure the criteria are being met.

Unit 102/202/302 continues to be a problem in many submissions with the re-purposing of the still image files. Using the OCR assignment, the Level 3 unit 302 requires the conversion of a high resolution portrait style image to a PAL frame at 720 x 576 pixels. However a number of learners maintain the portrait style aspect ratio but this is unsuitable for use as a PAL video frame. Another issue seen regularly is that learners are shrinking/scaling the image to fit the new dimensions but this distorts the image quite severely so that it appears 'squashed'. Instead, learners should be cropping to the required pixel dimensions and dpi resolution. This problem is seen across both Level 2 and Level 3. If the re-purposing is not completed correctly the achievement of the unit is unlikely to be confirmed by the external examiner-moderator. Looking at the submissions for this unit over the last year, too many are still being presented without the digital media files being included. Screenshots of editing processes are not an effective substitute for this.

Unit 111/211/311 (Web authoring) has a range of approaches and not all of these are appropriate. The software applications range from using Publisher at level 1 (which is not a good choice even at this level) through to Wix and Wordpress at Level 2 and Level 3. More suitable applications would be the dedicated software such as Serif WebPlus and Dreamweaver. It should be noted that Wix and Wordpress are commonly used in industry but do not have the same level of demand as using web authoring software, nor do they have the same opportunities to adequately meet all of the assessment criteria. Consequently they should not be used for any of the web authoring units.

The digital graphics unit 113/213/313 continues to have issues with the fitness for purpose of the final work. For example, if the assignment brief requires a graphic for print purposes at A4 then a low-resolution version at 72dpi that is 595 x 842 pixels is unsuitable. In these cases the unit should not be assessed as a pass. This is where it is important to supply a copy of the assignment brief alongside the learner's work so that the moderation process can confirm that the assessment criteria have been met in LO3 (creating the product).

One other popular unit is that on digital photography (117/217/317). On a positive note, the photographic portfolios often tend to be to a good standard with creative angles and compositions in many cases. This is to be encouraged and the practical skills are generally good in this unit. The choice of digital camera needs careful consideration and to truly develop the appropriate skills, smartphones are still not considered to be a good option. This applies to submissions at Level 2 and 3 in particular.

The Adobe vendor units such as A220 (Photoshop) are not certificated by OCR. Learners can complete these units and gain credit for their achievement but they must complete and pass the online exam that is taken at an approved Adobe test centre. Once the certificate is obtained it can be scanned and uploaded to the OCR MAPS e-portfolio for credit to be given towards a Certificate or Diploma. This has caused some misunderstanding over the last year and Centres cannot submit a portfolio of evidence in lieu of this.

## Sector Update

The reforms to vocational qualifications have continued over the last year although the qualifications have been extended so that entries can be made up to 31/12/2016. The Level 3 Certificate in Creative iMedia continues to be the knowledge based qualification for the Creative and Digital Media apprenticeship although it is conceivable that this may change in the future. For the purposes of learner progression in this sector and subject, OCR are also launching the new Cambridge Technicals in Digital Media in late 2015. The OCR website is regularly updated with details of changes to the range of digital media qualifications available and Centres would be encouraged to monitor this.

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