

Centre set up and approval

Q. How do I register my centre's intention to offer OCR Diplomas?

A. Existing OCR centres do not need to gain additional approval from OCR to use OCR as their Diploma awarding body (DAB). If you wish to use OCR as a DAB for any of your learners, you should select OCR within the Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS) (by visiting www.diplomaaggregationservice.org/das) as one of your DABs. You will need to establish an 'alias' by which OCR will recognise requests made by your centre via the DAS. For OCR, you should use your National Centre Number as this alias.

Q. What approval does my centre need to offer OCR Principal Learning and Project qualifications?

A. To offer any OCR Diploma component, you must be a registered OCR centre:

- For **general qualifications**, e.g. Principal Learning, Project, A Level and GCSE, you need to have general qualification approval.
- For **vocational qualifications**, e.g. Functional Skills, OCR Nationals or CLAiT, you will need approval for each qualification.

To obtain the correct centre registration application form, or if you are not sure whether your centre has the appropriate centre registration, please call the OCR Customer Contact Centre on 01223 553998.

In addition, English maintained schools and colleges can only make entries for Principal Learning if they are the learner's home centre or assessment centre within an approved Gateway consortium.

Registering/entering candidates

Q. How do I register candidates for an OCR Diploma?

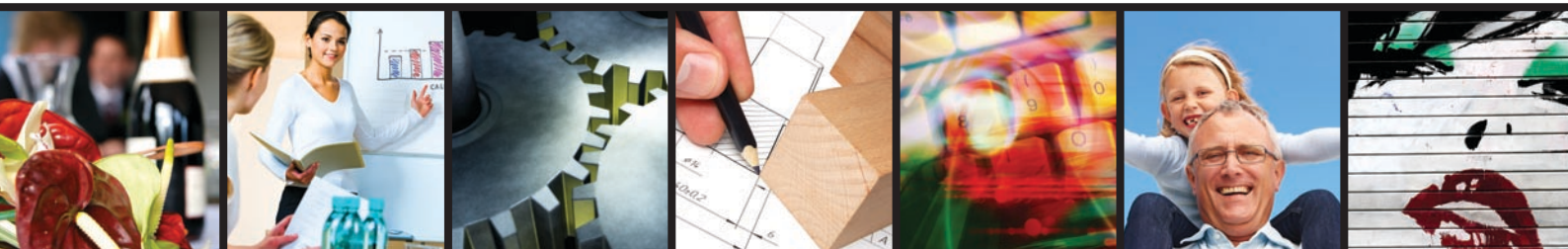
A. You must first obtain a unique learner number (ULN) from the Learning Records Service. Once each learner has a ULN, it is possible to open a learner account for them within the Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS). You can then choose to register OCR as a learner's Diploma awarding body (DAB). Although this is an optional step, until learners are registered with OCR as their DAB, OCR will not be able to view the learner details and, therefore, provide any detailed support to centres for these learners.

Q. How do I enter candidates for OCR Principal Learning and Project qualifications?

A. Estimated entries should be made for Principal Learning and Project qualifications via Interchange. Final entries can be entered for in the normal way using EDI or Interchange:

- Principal Learning is a unitised qualification, meaning that separate entries will be required for each unit, as well as a certification entry.
- Foundation, Higher and Extended Project are linear qualifications, and only require one entry for each qualification.

For more information, see the OCR Admin Guide and Entry Codes: 14–19 Qualifications.



Q. What are the entry deadlines for Principal Learning and Project?

A.

Series	Estimated entry deadline	Final entry deadline
January 2011	21 September 2010	21 October 2010
June 2011	10 October 2010	21 March 2010

Q. What is prior achievement?

A. Learners are able to include qualifications taken from as far back as January 2005 as part of their Diploma.

Qualifications achieved before the learner account is opened are known as prior achievement. This means that learners who took Functional Skills qualifications during 2007/08 should use the prior achievement process in order to have these results included within their Diploma.

Q. Do I have to apply for prior achievement?

A. OCR offers two automatic prior achievement processes:

- We check the DAS regularly for newly opened learner accounts and compare the ULN associated with each new account with the data we hold. If we find a result with a matching, valid ULN against it then that result will automatically be sent to the DAS within ten days.
- When we receive a new entry with a valid ULN, if we have any historic results for that learner, we will check if they have a learner account and, if they do, we will send the results automatically to the DAS within ten days.

Q. What happens if my prior achievement doesn't happen automatically?

A. When you open a learner account or make a new entry, if, after ten days, there are prior achievements which have not been sent to the DAS, it will be necessary to complete and send a prior achievement form to OCR. This is available to download from the OCR website. It is essential that the learner's ULN is included on the form so that it can be added to the learner's records. This will enable the results to be sent to the learner account in the DAS.

The result should then be visible within the learner account in the DAS within ten days of OCR receiving the correct information. If there is a problem with the application, OCR will contact you to resolve it.

Q. How are fees charged for Principal Learning and Project?

A. Centres will be invoiced by OCR after final entries have been received. Fee rates can be found in the OCR Fees List.

Q. How do we apply for Diploma access arrangements?

A. Access arrangements should be made for each Diploma component separately rather than the Diploma as a whole. Applications should be made by the home centre and then communicated to the relevant assessment centres.

Detailed information about access arrangements can be found in the *JCQ Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration* together with each component's admin documentation.

For queries relating to access arrangements for OCR qualifications, please call the Special Requirements Team on 01223 552505.



Re-sit rules

Q. What are the re-sit rules for Principal Learning?

A. There are no re-sit rules for Principal Learning units, i.e. candidates may re-sit a unit as many times as necessary, and their best result will always be counted towards the overall certification for Principal Learning.

Q. What are the re-sit rules for Foundation, Higher and Extended Project?

A. There are no re-sit rules for the Projects, i.e. candidates may re-sit the qualification as many times as necessary, and their best result will be counted towards their Diploma.

Internally assessed and visiting moderator units

Q. How do I arrange for a Visiting Moderator to come to my centre to assess the Creative and Media Principal Learning units?

A. Soon after submitting your final entries you will receive the contact details of the OCR Visiting Moderator assigned to your centre.

Q. How do I submit marks for internally assessed assessments?

A. Marks for internally assessed units should be submitted online via Interchange, EDI or on an MS1 mark sheet sent to you after final entries have been received.

Q. Do we have to submit our Project titles for approval to OCR?

A. No, centres do not need to submit their titles for approval.

Q. What is the OCR Repository?

A. This is an area of Interchange which allows centres to upload candidate work for moderation (or, in the case of MFL, marking).

Results

Q. When/how will I receive results for Principal Learning units and awards?

A.

Series	Qualification	EDI/Interchange	Publication date
January 2011	Principal Learning units (limited availability), Extended Project	9 March 2011	10 March 2011
June 2011	Extended Project, Level 3 Principal Learning units	17 August 2011	18 August 2011
	Project, Levels 1 and 2 Principal Learning	24 August 2011	25 August 2011

Note: Principal Learning is a unitised qualification. Centres therefore need to ensure that a certification entry is made when a candidate is ready to claim their overall Principal Learning qualification.



Q. When/how will I receive results for a Diploma in June 2010?

- A. Component awarding bodies will send component results to the learner account. The Diploma Aggregation Service will aggregate the component results and, once there are enough eligible components, calculate a Diploma trial grade.

If there is an intention to claim, the DAS will automatically send the claim for the trial grade to OCR. OCR will accept the claim and issue the Diploma results online via Interchange. This will normally be within seven days.

If you have made an intention to claim so that Diploma results are issued to coincide with the Principal Learning/Project results issue, the Diploma results will be issued as shown below:

Series	Diploma Level	Results available to centres	Results available to issue to learners
January 2011	All levels	9 March 2010	10 March 2010
June 2011	Advanced/Progression Diplomas (Level 3)	17 August 2010	18 August 2010
	Foundation (Level 1) and Higher (Level 2)	24 August 2010	25 August 2010

Q. How do I claim a Diploma?

- A. There are two ways to claim a Diploma for your learner: either by making an intention to claim (ITC) before the component results are available or by manually claiming once all the component results have been issued. Both of these need to be done via the Diploma Aggregation Service.

Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) and Work Experience

Q. How should PLTS and work experience be tracked, and what will OCR ask for?

- A. It is the responsibility of a centre to ensure that a candidate has sufficiently covered requirements for the development of PLTS and work experience. OCR will not ask centres directly for any record or declaration that this has occurred. Centres will, however, need to declare via the Diploma Aggregation Service that a candidate has fulfilled the PLTS and work experience requirements before their Diploma can be awarded.

Q. Is this a new qualification or just a wrap-around for existing qualifications?

- A. It's a bit of both. There are many newly developed components in the Diploma. These include Functional Skills, Project and Principal Learning which is the sector related element of learning for which new content has been developed by employer-led Diploma Development Partnerships. These components form a mandatory part of each Diploma. Existing qualifications can be included as Additional/Specialist Learning so there is choice for learners as to which existing qualifications they include within the overall Diploma qualification.

Q. Are Diplomas replacing any other qualifications?

- A. Diplomas offer a qualification which is very different from GCSEs and A Levels on the one hand and vocational qualifications on the other, as they incorporate both general and applied learning. They have been introduced to broaden the curriculum offer rather than to replace existing provision.

Q. Does this mean that a learner will choose between GCSEs and a Diploma?

- A. At Key Stage 4 learners will still have to follow the National Curriculum so the Diploma will be taken instead of some GCSEs but those GCSEs that assess National Curriculum subjects will still be taken. There is also room within Additional/Specialist learning for one or two GCSEs so a learner could complete Key Stage 4 with a Diploma and a handful of GCSEs.



Q. Who will do Diplomas?

A. Eventually Diplomas will be available to all learners as one of several optional routes so that every learner can choose the qualification(s) that best suits their strengths, weaknesses, future plans and learning/assessment preferences. Schools and colleges will advise learners in exactly the same way they do at present taking these factors into account.

Q. If Diplomas have been developed with employers in the lead; does this mean they will prepare young people for jobs in industry?

A. Diplomas are intended to prepare young people both for Higher Education and employment. They will prepare learners for employment by giving them an understanding of how particular employment sectors work and by giving them some broad employability skills. What they will not do is prepare someone for a particular job.

Q. Will Diplomas prepare students for a Degree course?

A. They are certainly intended to prepare students for Higher Education as well as for employment. The Extended Project which is included in the Level 3 Diploma is designed for stretch and challenge; the Principal Learning content is sector related rather than occupation specific and the focus of Principal Learning is on knowledge, understanding and skills, including cognitive skills.

Q. What do I need to do if I want to offer Diplomas?

A. You need to be a member of a consortium of centres wanting to deliver Diplomas through their partnership arrangements. Your consortium would then need to apply to go through the Gateway process. This is a process of evaluating a partnership's readiness to deliver by assessing this against a number of factors including employer engagement, collaborative working, capacity, workforce development arrangements and planning effectiveness.

Q. How will Diplomas be assessed?

A. For Principal Learning – assessment will be a combination of internal and external assessment.

Those elements of generic learning that need to be assessed are Functional Skills in English, Maths and ICT and the Project. The Project will be internally assessed and Functional Skills will be mainly externally assessed (the English Speaking, Listening and Communication component will be internally assessed).

Work experience and personal learning and thinking skills will need to be recorded and there will be opportunities for recognising the latter within both Principal Learning and the Project in particular.

Where existing qualifications are taken as Additional and Specialist learning they will be assessed and verified using the existing methods. Any new qualifications developed will have their own assessment methods.



Q. Are UCAS points available for Diplomas?

A. Yes. Tariff points have been allocated separately to the Principal and Generic Learning component and the Additional and Specialist Learning (ASL) component. At present only those ASL qualifications already on the Tariff will attract UCAS points; however it is likely that more ASL qualifications will be included on the Tariff over time.

Qualification	Grade	UCAS points
A Level	C	80
Advanced Diploma – Principal Learning and Extended Project /Progression Diploma	C	200
Advanced Diploma – Additional and Specialist Learning (in this case one A Level)	A	120

Q. What are the Diploma equivalences?

A. This very much depends upon whether you are comparing Diplomas with other qualifications in terms of delivery time required, complexity, perceived value or other factors. However, the following are broad equivalencies:

- Foundation Diploma – 5 GCSEs at Level 1 (D–G Grade)
- Higher Diploma – 7 GCSEs at Level 2 (A*–C Grade)
- Progression Diploma – 2.5 A Levels (A*–E Grade)
- Advanced Diploma – 3.5 A Levels (A*–E Grade)

Q. What is Third Party Learner Administrator access?

A. Within the Diploma aggregation service, it is possible to delegate Third Party Learner Administrator (TPLA) access to Diploma awarding bodies (DABs). This allows a DAB to amend details within your learners' accounts; however, as this is not something that OCR would do, you should ensure that when you create your DAB alias for OCR, you do not delegate TPLA access to us.

