



Ascentis Pre-Entry Level Award in Digital Communications

Specification

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ABOUT ASCENTIS

Ascentis was originally established in 1975 as OCNW, a co-operative scheme between Universities and Colleges of Further Education. Ascentis was the first 'Open College' in the UK and served the needs of its members for over 34 years. Throughout this period, OCNW grew yet maintained its independence in order that it could continue to respond to the requirements of its customers and provide a consistently high standard of service to all centres across the country and in recent years, to its increasing cohorts of overseas learners.

In 2009 OCNW became Ascentis - a company limited by guarantee and a registered educational charity.

Ascentis is distinctive and unusual in that it is both:

- **an Awarding Organisation** regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual, England), Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA, Northern Ireland) and Qualifications Wales

and

- **an Access Validating Agency (AVA)** for 'Access to HE Programmes' licensed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

Ascentis is therefore able to offer a comprehensive ladder of opportunities to centres and their students, including Foundation Learning, vocational programmes and progressing to QAA recognised Access to HE qualifications. The flexible and adult-friendly ethos of Ascentis has resulted in centres throughout the UK choosing to run its qualifications.

ASCENTIS CONTACT DETAILS

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ASCENTIS PRE-ENTRY LEVEL AWARD IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

This qualification focuses on introducing learners to online communications and lays the foundations for enabling social mobility using digital devices. Learners will be able to explore a range of digital communication methods and begin to build the skills needed to be able to read and reply to messages across a variety of platforms. Learners will also be introduced to the concept of social media. They will identify popular platforms and the types of media each platform uses. This qualification acts as a precursor to the: 'Communicating' skills statement take from the National Standards for Essential Digital Skills.

There are several features of this qualification that make it very appropriate for its target learners:

- Verification and certification can be offered throughout the year, allowing maximum flexibility for centres
- 1 short mandatory unit to complete
- Can be delivered either as a classroom-based course or as a blended learning programme
- Evidence can be generated within a wide range of organisational contexts allowing the qualification to meet the specific requirements of the learners.

Aims

The aims of the qualification are to enable learners:

- 1 To identify methods of digital communications
- 2 To identify features of different types of digital communication
- 3 To read and respond to digital communication

Target Group

This qualification is aimed at a range of learners, including those who have had little interaction with digital equipment and resources, and learners who may have had little or no experience of formal learning.

Rules of Combination

Learners must complete one unit for the Ascentis Pre-Entry Award in an Introduction to Digital Communications. This is a single-unit qualification and certification is given for achieving a pass in the external assessment.

Ascentis Pre-Entry Level Award in Digital Communications			
Title	Level	Credit Value	TQT
Digital Communications	Pre-Entry	2	20

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

The recommended guided learning hours for this qualification is 20.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

The total qualification time for this qualification is 20.

Time Limit for the Process of Credit Accumulation and Exemptions

Credit accumulation is usually within the life span of the qualification. Exemptions may have been achieved previous to the qualification start date; each case will be considered separately.

Recommended Prior Knowledge, Attainment and/or Experience

There is no prior knowledge or experience required to access this qualification.

Age Range of Qualification

This qualification is suitable for young people aged 14-19 and adult learners.

Opportunities for Progression

The Ascentis Pre-Entry Award in an Introduction to Digital Communications can be taken alongside Ascentis' range of Pre-Entry Digital qualifications:

- Ascentis Pre-Entry Award in an Introduction to Digital Documents
- Ascentis Pre-Entry Award in an Introduction to Using Digital Devices and the Internet
- Ascentis Pre-Entry Award in an Introduction to Digital Awareness and Internet Safety

This helps to provide learners with the breadth of study which enables progression onto the Ascentis Entry Level Award in Essential Digital Skills for Work and Life (Entry 3).

Centre Recognition

This qualification can only be offered by centres recognised by Ascentis and approved to run this qualification. Details of the centre recognition and qualification approval process are available from the Ascentis office (tel. 01524 845046) or from the website at www.ascentis.co.uk.

Qualification Approval

If your centre is already a recognised centre, you will need to complete and submit a qualification approval form to deliver this qualification. Details of the qualification approval process are available from the Ascentis office (tel. 01524 845046) or from the website at www.ascentis.co.uk.

Registration

All learners must normally be registered with Ascentis within seven weeks of commencement of a course via the Ascentis electronic registration portal. Late registration may result in a fee, refer to the latest version of the product catalogue.

Status in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

This qualification is available in England. It is only offered in English. If you wish to deliver the qualification in any other nation, please contact development@ascentis.co.uk

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

In the development of this qualification Ascentis has made every attempt to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to achievement. For learners with particular requirements reasonable adjustments may be made in order that they can have fair assessment and demonstrate attainment. There are also arrangements for special consideration for any learner suffering illness, injury or indisposition. Full details of reasonable adjustments and special considerations are available from the login area of the Ascentis website www.ascentis.co.uk or through contacting the Ascentis office.

Enquiries and Appeals Procedure

Ascentis has an appeals procedure in accordance with the regulatory arrangements in the Ofqual *General Conditions of Recognition*¹. Full details of this procedure, including how to make an application, are available from the login area of the Ascentis website www.ascentis.co.uk or through contacting the Ascentis office.

Useful Links

Web links and other resources featured in this specification are suggestions only to support the delivery of this qualification and should be implemented at the centre's discretion. The hyperlinks provided were live at the time this specification was last reviewed. Please kindly notify Ascentis if you find a link that is no longer active.

Please note: Ascentis is not responsible for the content of third-party websites and, whilst we check external links regularly, the owners of these sites may remove or amend these documents or web pages at any time.

In Northern Ireland it is the CCEA General Conditions of Recognition and Qualifications Wales is the Standard Conditions of Recognition.

ASSESSMENT AND VERIFICATION ARRANGEMENTS

Assessment

The mandatory single unit is internally assessed through the learner building up a portfolio of evidence that covers the relevant assessment criteria, internally verified by the centre and then externally verified by Ascentis.

On completion of the learners' evidence for the Award, the assessor is required to complete the Summary Record of Achievement for each learner. The Summary Record of Achievement asks assessors and the internal verifier to confirm that the rules of combination have been followed. The Summary Record of Achievement form is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

Centres are required to retain all evidence from all learners for external verification and for four weeks afterwards in case any appeal is made.

Internal Assessment

Evidence for each unit is through building up a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that all the assessment criteria within the unit have been achieved. The evidence will be assessed by the assessor at the centre, who may or may not be the tutor teaching the course.

Portfolios of evidence should include a variety of evidence to demonstrate that the assessment criteria for each unit have been met. Examples of evidence that could be included are:

- Observation record
- Questions and discussions
- Photographs
- Video
- Worksheets
- Audio recordings
- Self-Assessments
- Workbook activities
- Multiple choice tests
- Photocards
- Virtual reality imagery and video
- Screen capture

If the learner fails to meet the assessment criteria on the first attempt at an activity, they may redraft the work following feedback given by the tutor. However, tutors must not correct the work of the learner, and all feedback given by the tutor must be included within the learner's evidence.

Learners' portfolio work should include a tracking sheet to show where the evidence for each assessment criterion is to be found. Some activities could produce evidence for more than one unit, which is acceptable as long as there is clear reference to this on the tracking sheet. Examples of tracking sheets are found in [Appendix 2](#).

Verification

Internal Verification

Internal verification is the process of ensuring that everyone who assesses a particular unit in a centre is assessing to the same standards i.e. consistently and reliably. Internal verification activities will include: ensuring any stimulus or materials used for the purposes of assessment are fit for purpose; sampling assessments; standardisation of assessment decisions; standardisation of internal verification decisions. Internal Verifiers are also responsible for supporting assessors by providing constructive advice and guidance in relation to the qualification delivered.

Ascentis offer free refresher training in support of this role through an Ascentis Internal Quality Assurance course. The purpose of the course is to provide staff in centres with knowledge and understanding of Ascentis IQA processes and procedures, which will enable them to carry out their role more effectively. To book your place on a course or request further information, please contact the Ascentis Quality Assurance Team (qualityassurance@ascentis.co.uk).

Further information is available from the login section of the Ascentis website www.ascentis.co.uk.

External Verification

Recognised centres will be visited in accordance with a verification model that is considered most appropriate for the provision. More frequent verifications can be requested from the Ascentis Quality Assurance team, for which there is usually an additional charge. External verification will usually focus on the following areas:

- A review of the centres management of the regulated provision
- The levels of resources to support the delivery of the qualification, including both physical resources and staffing
- Ensuring the centre is using appropriate assessment methods and making appropriate assessment decisions according to Ascentis' requirements
- Ensuring the centre has appropriate internal quality assurance arrangements as outlined within the relevant qualification specification
- Checking that the centre is using appropriate administrative arrangements to support the function of delivery and assessment

External Quality Assurers will usually do this through discussion with the centre management team; assessment and Internal Quality Assurance staff; verifying a sample of learners' evidence; talking to learners, reviewing relevant centre documentation and systems.

Knowledge, Understanding and Skills required of Assessors and Internal Verifiers (General)

Centres must ensure that those delivering and assessing Ascentis qualifications are occupationally knowledgeable and competent within the relevant subject area.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that all staff involved in the delivery of the qualification are appropriately qualified. Ascentis will not be held responsible for any issues that relate to centre staffing which could impact on the successful delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance of our qualifications.

Those delivering the qualification should preferably hold or be working towards a recognised teaching qualification. Assessors must be able to make appropriate assessment decisions. Internal Quality Assurers need to have knowledge and experience of the internal quality assurance processes.

Centres are required to ensure that appropriate training and support is in place for staff involved in the delivery, assessment and internal verification of Ascentis qualifications.

Ascentis offers free support for centres. Further information on the support that is available can be found on the Ascentis website.

UNIT SPECIFICATIONS

Unit Title: **Digital Communications**

Credit Value of Unit: 2

GLH of Unit: 20

Level of Unit: Pre-Entry

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will be able to:	The learner can:
1 Understand what is meant by 'digital communications'	1.1 State what is meant by 'digital communication'
	1.2 Name methods of digital communication
	1.3 State what is meant by 'digital communication applications'
	1.4 Identify at least three digital communication applications
2 Communicate via text/ Instant messenger	2.1 Identify the feature of a text/instant message
	2.2 Open and read a message
	2.3 Reply to a message
	2.4 Delete a message
3 Communicate by Email	3.1 Identify the features of an email
	3.2 Open and read an email
	3.3 Reply to an email
	3.4 Delete and email
4 Understand what is meant by 'social media'	4.1 State what is meant by 'social media'
	4.2 Identify at least two forms of social media
	4.3 View content on a range of social media

Indicative Content

Please be aware that the indicative content supplied below is not exhaustive and is a suggested guide only.

What is digital communication:

The sending and receiving of messages via a digital device

Methods of digital communication:

Email, Text, Instant message, Video calling. Social media

What is a digital communications application?

A piece of software on a digital device which is used to send messages to other users

Digital communication applications:

Learners should be able to identify **at least one** example from each subheading.

- **Email** (Gmail, Outlook, Hotmail etc),
- **Messages, Instant messenger** (WhatsApp, Facebook messenger, KiK, Skype, Viber etc.)
- **Video calling** (Microsoft Teams, Skype, Zoom, many instant messaging applications now have capacity for video calling),

Examples of features of a text/instant message:

To, contacts, add, images, voice note, conversation area

Examples of features of an email:

Send, to, subject, suitable greeting, suitable sign off, reply, reply all

Identify social media platforms:

Learners should be able to identify **at least two** examples:

YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Flickr etc.

Content on a range of social media platforms: Videos, images, memes, posts, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Flickr etc.

APPENDIX 1

Summary Record of Achievement

Ascentis Pre-Entry Award in Digital Communications

Unit Title	Level	Credit Value	Date completed	Assessor Signature	Internal Verifier Signature (if sampled)
Digital Communications	Pre-Entry	2			

Learner Name _____

Minimum Credit Value of Qualification: 2

I confirm that the minimum number of credits at the appropriate level have been achieved in order for a claim for certification to be made. I can confirm that the credit has been achieved from the correct combination of mandatory and optional units as specified within the Rules of Combination.

Assessor Signature _____

Internal Verifier Signature (if sampled) _____

APPENDIX 2

Tracking Sheet

Unit Title: Digital Communications

Criteria	Assessment Method	Evidence Details	Portfolio Reference	Completion Date
1.1 State what is meant by 'digital communication'				
1.2 Name methods of digital communication				
1.3 State what is meant by 'digital communications applications'				
1.4 Identify at least three digital communication applications				
2.1 Identify the feature of a text/instant message				
2.2 Open and read a message				
2.3 Reply to a message				
2.4 Delete a message				
3.1 Identify the features of an email				
3.2 Open and read an email				
3.3 Reply to an email				
3.4 Delete and email				
4.1 State what is meant by 'social media'				
4.2 Identify at least two forms of social media				
4.3 View content on a range of social media				

The above evidence has been assessed against the standards and has been judged for validity, authenticity, currency, reliability and sufficiency.

Learner Signature _____ Date _____

Assessor Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Verifier (if sampled) _____ Date _____