

**EXPERT GROUP REPORT
FOR
REVIEW OF AWARD
IN
THE UCAS TARIFF**

ABC Level 3 Diploma in Fashion Retail

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THE CONDUCT OF THE COMPARABILITY STUDY

In order to ensure a robust and transparent procedure for allocating UCAS Tariff points to qualifications seeking admission to the framework, UCAS approached the University of Oxford, Department of Educational Studies for assistance in developing an appropriate methodology.

Acknowledging the problematic nature of comparability studies, and recognising that a mechanical procedure would not work, the Department proposed a procedure based on the premise that such comparisons can only be achieved through the exercise of collaborative judgement by an Expert Group.

Guidelines were drawn up for the composition of the Expert Group, the evidence that would need to be collected and examined, and the choice of a benchmark qualification.

Procedures were developed for the conduct of the work of the Expert Group, including detailed sets of questions to be addressed at different stages in the process. Questions appropriate to the awards under consideration are selected and are used to guide, not constrain, the work of the Expert Group.

The judgements made by the Expert Group in this report are presented as suggested allocations of UCAS points which take account of the size and demand of the award seeking admission to the Tariff, and a candidate's level of attainment within that award. The guidelines also provide for an automatic review process to be conducted at a later stage in the light of further evidence. This latter point acknowledges the fact that both benchmark qualifications and those seeking admission to the Tariff may still be relatively new. Consequently there may only be a relatively small amount of evidence (particularly candidate evidence) available at the time of the work of the Expert Group. There is, therefore, a need to review the decisions of the Group when more evidence becomes available and when HE admissions tutors have gained more experience of using the awards as entry qualifications.

The work of the Expert Group is subject to a quality assurance procedure by an independent auditor from higher education.



SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ABC Level 3 Diploma in Fashion Retail had changed to an extent since the original Tariff work was undertaken in 2003:

- Increase from 450 to 600 Guided Learning Hours
- Increase from 7 to 10 units in the Diploma
- Increase in optional units (4 out of 8, instead of 2 out of 5)

The Expert Group's considerations included a review of candidate evidence drawn from Unit 5 (portfolios). Although there were suggestions that this unit did not evidence all the skills that students would be developing through the Level 3 Diploma, the HE representatives recognised that the qualification did offer a certain amount of utility for progression to higher education.

The Group suggested that the qualification would benefit from greater transparency between content, assessment models and marking criteria, along with the production of exemplar materials.

In light of the discussions and in considering the utility of the ABC Fashion Retail Diploma for progression to HE, the Group agreed that the current allocation of UCAS Tariff points was fair and should remain at the same level:

Distinction	160
Merit	120
Pass	80

ABC Awards undertook to review the assessment methodology and implement changes according to comments made by the Tariff Expert group. It was reported that the Group would reconvene in 2010 to reconsider Tariff points in light of these changes.

All recommendations were endorsed by the Tariff Reference Group and Tariff Advisory Group and formally approved by the UCAS Board in December 2008.



SECTION 1: THE COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT GROUP

The following individuals with knowledge and experience of the qualifications under consideration in this study were selected to form the Expert Group:

- Shalina Alabaksh, Lead Moderator, ABC Awards
- Claire Allen, Course Leader for BA (Hons) Fashion, University of Huddersfield
- George Bouvier, Senior Lecturer, Manchester Metropolitan University
- Sue Langton, Qualifications Development Manager, ABC Awards
- Diane Mitchell, Chief Examiner for Applied Business GCE,OCR
- Caroline Thraves, Cluster Leader, Coleg Sir Gar.

Pip Gilroy, UCAS Policy Manager, acted as facilitator for the work of the Group, with Richard Spencer, UCAS Policy Officer, acting as secretary, ensuring that the Group worked systematically through the procedures.

The whole process was overseen and quality assured by Dr Geoff Hayward, an independent higher education-based consultant.

In addition, the process was observed by Karen Dennison, Head of the Fashion Retail Academy; Nigel Florence, Executive Director; and Carol Graham, Director of Business Development, ABC Awards.

CVs of the experts within the group are attached as Appendix 1.



SECTION 2: OVERVIEW OF ABC LEVEL 3 DIPLOMA IN FASHION RETAIL**2.1 Aims and purpose of the qualification**

This qualification aims to:

- enable learners to develop knowledge, understanding and applied skills of specialist fashion retail management
- encourage progression by assisting in the development of knowledge, understanding and skills that learners will need to access further or higher education or to enter employment
- encourage an evaluative approach to personal and professional development.

The main outcomes of this qualification are to provide the learner with an understanding of:

- the importance of strong leadership and motivational skills
- Key Store Manager roles and responsibilities
- departmental relationships between merchandising, buying and distribution
- design and display techniques
- evaluation of personal and professional development, including future learning planning and professional practice.

This qualification provides a unique opportunity to progress within the retail sector and is intended to provide an opportunity for further progression into higher study (foundation degree or honours degree) and a fulfilling career within fashion retail.

2.2 History of the qualification

This qualification has been developed with the primary aim of enabling candidates to acquire the depth of skills and underpinning knowledge to support progress into higher/further education/training or employment (on a management training programme) within a fashion retail company. The programme first ran in 2005-06 and was allocated UCAS Tariff points in July 2006 following an Expert Group meeting, which benchmarked the award to the BTEC Nationals in Retail. The agreed allocation of UCAS Tariff points in 2006 was:

Pass: 80 points
 Merit: 120 points
 Distinction: 160 points.

The curriculum content has been researched and developed through an innovative and interactive collaborative relationship (industry-focused) between a higher education provider (London College of Fashion, part of the University of the Arts) and retail business employers (Arcadia). The qualification has continued to receive



substantial employer input and works closely with the relevant Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). The qualification is now looking to be extended beyond the Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) and the new qualification will be accredited to be on the Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF) until 2013.

This qualification has a uniqueness over existing provision within this sector in as much as there is integrated learning through practical application – in-store and academic activities. This uniqueness is also enhanced with the innovative assessment methodology combining both practical industry-based assessment, along with traditional academic methods.

It is important to highlight that there have been some changes made to the Fashion Retail Diploma since July 2006, namely that the Guided Learning Hours (GLH) have increased from 450 GLH to 600 GLH, and the number of units have increased from seven to nine.

2.3 Entry requirements for the qualification

This qualification is designed for those learners who have achieved a Level 2 Fashion Retail qualification and who wish to continue within the sector into a full-time, further education vocational programme or higher education. The qualification may be offered as a freestanding qualification in its own right or offered to learners on other full/ part-time or block-release retail/ fashion courses who wish to acquire a more detailed knowledge and practice of Fashion Retail.

Those wishing to enter this Level 3 course must satisfy the following entry requirements:

- young adults, usually 17 –18 year olds
- aptitude and enthusiasm for fashion retail
- minimum 6 months full-time work experience in a fashion retail store
- GCSE Maths and English grade C or equivalent
- computer keyboarding skills with a familiarity with standard software packages
- Level 2 Diploma in Fashion Retail.

Each centre is required to notify the awarding body of its policies on access and equality of opportunity. Within the parameters of these policies, a centre is expected to recruit with integrity on the basis of a learner's ability to contribute to and successfully complete the qualification. There are three centres approved to run this qualification at the moment: University of the Arts, London; Fashion Retail Academy, London; and New College Nottingham. There were 233 registrations in the academic year 2007/08 and for 2008/09 to date there are 240 registrations.



2.4 Age of candidates

17-18 years of age.

2.5 Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

The ABC Level 3 Diploma in Fashion Retail qualification equates to 600 GLH. This is based on the Learning and Skills Council definition of GLH:

“All times when a member of staff is present to give specific guidance towards the learning aim being studied on a programme. This includes lectures, tutorials, and supervised study in; for example, open learning centres and learning workshops. It also includes time spent by staff assessing learners’ achievements. It does not include time spent by staff in the day-to-day marking of assignments or homework where the learner is not present. It does not include hours where supervision or assistance is of a general nature and is not specific to the study of the learners.”

2.6 Content and structure of the qualification

For successful completion of the ABC Level 3 Diploma in Fashion Retail nine units are required. Learners must complete five mandatory units and four optional units chosen from the list below.

Mandatory units:

Unit 1 Management Skills for Retail (Y/103/2382)

Unit 2 Store Operations for Retail (H/501/8929)

Unit 3 Buying and Merchandising for Fashion Retail (Y/501/8846)

Unit 4 Visual Merchandising for Successful Fashion Retail (K/103/2385)

Unit 5 Professional Development in Retail Management (M/103/2386).

Optional units:

Unit 6 Developing Retail Brands (A/103/2388)

Unit 7 Fashion Promotion (F/103/2389)

Unit 8 Style Advising in Fashion Retail (A/501/8855)

Unit 9 Fashion Design for Business Success (A/103/2391)

Unit 10 Pixel Based Image Manipulation (R/102/7388)

Unit 11 Research and Design Development: Fashion Image (T/102/4032)

Unit 12 Fashion Language, History and Culture (A/102/4033)

Unit 13 Professional People Management (F/501/8856).

2.7 Assessment – procedures, methods and levels

Learners must be successful in both of the following assessment components to achieve the ABC Level 3 Diploma in Fashion Retail:



- independent assessment – final major project (Unit 5) including a Statement of Intent – internally set, independently assessed, with external moderation by ABC
- an internally assessed portfolio of evidence, externally moderated by ABC.

To achieve the whole qualification, a learner must achieve a pass for Units 1-4 and the 4 option units completed.

Learners are awarded a single grade for Unit 5 of Pass, Merit or Distinction based on Grading Criteria in Section 2.8 below. The grade for Unit 5 constitutes the final qualification grade.

Learners must achieve the assessment criteria for each unit in order to pass them. Table 1 outlines the assessment criteria for each unit:

Table 1: ABC Fashion Retail Diploma assessment criteria for each unit

Unit 1 Management Skills for Retail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the key requirements of the role of a Store Manager in making/implementing policies, procedures and processes • Evaluate how strong and effective teams can maximise performance • Analyse how inspirational leadership and proactive team management relates to delivering effective customer service • Identify and evaluate key business performance information and data in driving sales and reducing costs
Unit 2 Store Operations for Retail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the key store / operational roles and responsibilities undertaken on a daily basis by the store manager • Identify and analyse the effect both external and internal factors can have on business performance. Consider how best to overcome these changes to ensure continued business success • Identify and evaluate store operations as key business drivers and how they can be best utilised to improve performance
Unit 3 Buying and Merchandising for Fashion Retail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret available data, trade and market information to formulate and plan a fashion range rationale and commercial buying strategy • Analyse the merchandise mix of products within a fashion retail store in relation to the critical path and related planned sales and profit targets • Examine the key drivers of a fashion retail business through analysis of information and key numerical skills • Demonstrate competence in using ICT skills (eg Excel, Photoshop) that are widely used within the industry
Unit 4 Visual Merchandising for Successful Fashion Retail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a display of merchandise using VM communication tools • Evaluate the impact of the display on sales in relation to current fashion trends and positive reflection of brand image • Research, plan and design fashion merchandise displays to achieve the effective flow of product within the store • Select and use appropriate fixtures, props and graphic material to display merchandise according to its characteristics
Unit 5 Professional Development in Retail Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate a project brief that enables skills and knowledge to be applied within a relevant professional retail management context • Demonstrate clear understanding of factors that affect professional practice relating to the project • Produce thorough research that supports the development of creative solutions • Explain the balance between ideas generation and realisation in creating solutions to fashion retail



<p>management problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and manage time and resources to meet the project's creative and professional intentions • Select specialist techniques and processes that suit the intended project outcomes • Prepare and present the outcomes of the project in a professional manner • Evaluate and analyse project outcomes against the stated intentions and objectives • Apply analysis and evaluation skills to reviewing progression opportunities
<p>Unit 6 Developing Retail Brands</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the key components, attributes and benefits of branding • Explain how the key components of branding are applied to a store brand and retail culture • Apply a range of creative branding techniques to communicate and grow a branded product creating an in-store brand experience
<p>Unit 7 Fashion Promotion</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the role and significance of fashion PR in relation to corporate strategy • Evaluate how the unique characteristics of fashion PR are used to gain a competitive advantage • Devise a fashion PR campaign that reflects the culture and identity of a fashion brand and evaluate its outcomes • Select and use a range of fashion PR media to communicate persuasive messages to targeted audiences
<p>Unit 8 Style Advising in Fashion Retail</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the role of the fashion stylist and how this contributes to successful fashion promotion and selling to achieve sales targets • Identify suitable styles for different body types • Examine a variety of customer fashion needs, wants and practicalities and understand how accessories are integrated into a fashion look • Assemble a range of individual fashion looks using available stock within the work based learning store
<p>Unit 9 Fashion Design for Business Success</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the fashion design process in relation to the brand customer's aspirations • Examine the process of research into design, using cultural influences and the application of the process within a retail design department • Apply and interpret research that responds to a set fashion design brief • Use appropriate visual techniques to communicate and present final fashion design outcomes
<p>Unit 10 Pixel Based Image Manipulation</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidently apply tools and functions of appropriate pixel-based image manipulation software • Establish settings and parameter for a range of image-file types • Construct and manipulate scanned images to achieve identified visual outcomes or intentions • Present and organise digital files ready for output or storage
<p>Unit 11 Research and Design Development: Fashion Image</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show an understanding of the importance of research, and undertake and apply research where necessary in relation to a set brief • Apply basic graphic skills to fashion drawings, mood boards and other methods of visual presentation • Illustrate an awareness of the retail fashion markets across a variety of market sectors and show an understanding of the importance of their general characteristics and knowledge of influential fashion designers • Design fashion image themes using inspirational research • Show an awareness of fashion trends in a variety of areas, accessories, fabrics, surface decoration, etc.
<p>Unit 12 Fashion Language, History and Culture</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand generic and technical terms used in fashion retail • Apply key terms in the discussion and written description of fashion retail • Show an awareness of fashion history relating to the development of fashionable images • Show an understanding of the role and importance of fashion in our society
<p>Unit 13 Professional People Management</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the range of strategies that can be used as tools for managing and developing individuals • Understand the impact of change on individuals and identify strategies for managing the process of change • Analyse the impact of different cultures in retail and their impact on staff performance • Demonstrate how effective use of personal development planning can improve performance



2.8 Grading

Certification will be awarded to those learners who have been authorised as completing all units by internal assessors and approved by external moderation. The final grade is awarded for Unit 5 and is confirmed by the independent assessor as Pass, Merit or Distinction using the grading criteria. To gain a pass, learners must achieve all assessment criteria for Unit 5.

Levels of achievement higher than a Pass grade will typically demonstrate the following characteristics:

Merit performance is differentiated through evidence of analysis and explanation, with support from staff through negotiation and feedback. This would typically be characterised by:

- the consistent application of skills and knowledge
- a clarity of decision-making skills through analysis and explanation
- commitment, collaboration and self-evaluation.

Distinction performance emphasises critical awareness and rational argument, with support from staff through questioning and feedback and is typically characterised by:

- flexible and inventive applications of skills and knowledge
- a range of creative solutions with coherent supporting arguments
- self-awareness, independence and initiative.

Table 2: Grading criteria

	MERIT	DISTINCTION
	Work should show:	Work should show:
Development and exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-depth analysis of and interpretation of problems and projects • selective and effective research is used to inform your ideas • individual approach to developing a wide range of alternative solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical analysis and interpretation of complex issues and wider context of problems and projects • independent, wide ranging and extensive research is used to inform your ideas • clear understanding of context in developing a range of inventive solutions.
Personal and professional progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ongoing motivation and commitment to planning and deadlines • realistic evaluation of progress against your aims, identifying strengths and weaknesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high level of motivation, commitment, independence and flexibility in planning • continuous evaluation of progress with action taken to build on strengths and address weaknesses.
Practical and technical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear understanding of the potential, limitations and uses of the skills and knowledge gained • consistently applied processes, skills and knowledge in developing creative solutions • clear explanation of the context and working methods you chose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in depth technical understanding and aesthetic awareness of skills, knowledge and processes • imaginatively and flexible application of processes, skills and knowledge in developing solutions • clear understanding of context in developing inventive solutions.



2.9 QA systems and code of practice

There should be ongoing evaluation by the staff and candidates and this should take place in the following ways:

- candidate self-evaluation
- regular review of learning outcomes against agreed criteria
- validation by suitably qualified and experienced internal assessor and internal moderator.

Internal Moderation

ABC requires centres to implement a programme of internal moderation to ensure that:

- candidates gain access to fair and reliable assessment opportunities
- everyone assesses to the same standards
- assessment decisions of assessors are sampled and monitored to ensure consistency
- assessors are supported with advice and guidance
- all work carried out is within agreed systems and procedures.

Internal moderators must not, under any circumstances, check their own assessment decisions. Further guidance on Internal Moderation is provided on ABC's website.

External Moderation

ABC have an appointed External Moderator to:

- visit each centre on ABC's behalf, usually once per academic year
- monitor and sample candidate's work to ensure that assessment decisions are fair, reliable, valid and consistent with required standards
- liaise between centres and ABC to establish standardsiation
- establish goodwill and assist with any problems arising from the delivery of an ABC qualification.

Further guidance on external moderation is provided on ABC's website.



SECTION 3: OVERVIEW OF BENCHMARK – OCR A LEVEL IN APPLIED BUSINESS (DOUBLE AWARD)

3.1 Aims and purpose of the qualification

All specifications in Applied Business aim to provide candidates with a broad introduction to the business sector and to encourage candidates to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in realistic business contexts; such as discovering the problems and opportunities faced by local businesses and/ or organising an enterprise activity. They aim to provide opportunities for candidates to develop sufficient depth of understanding to inform their choices between further study in higher education, training or direct employment.

Candidates are to be encouraged to acquire the following range of skills through the study of realistic business contexts:

- practical skills: personal organisation and time management, ICT skills
- presentational skills: producing a business report; making an oral presentation
- personal skills: initiative, creativity, perseverance, willingness to learn and progress
- interpersonal skills: working in teams, discussing problems or issues, leading a team
- cognitive skills: investigative and research skills, problem solving, decision making, using theory to analyse a real organisation, planning a project.

The specification aims to encourage candidates to develop knowledge and understanding of:

- the practices and techniques used within marketing, finance, operations management, human resource management, and the links between them
- the processes, attractions and risks of setting up an enterprise
- the relationship between the business and the changing external environment
- social and ethical issues in business.

The specification also encourages candidates to:

- contribute to the development of the skills required for success as an entrepreneur, manager or employee
- apply numerical and written business techniques to a variety of business contexts
- explore business problems and learn to identify possible solutions.



3.2 History of the qualification

The Advanced GCE (Double Award) in Applied Business was available for teaching from September 2005, with the first year of certification being June 2007.

GCEs in vocational subjects are broad-based vocational qualifications designed to widen participation in vocationally-related learning post-16. They have been designed to contribute to the quality and coherence of national provision and have a clear place in the Government's vision for secondary education.

The specifications build upon the broad educational framework supplied by the Qualification and Subject Criteria (QCA, ACCAC and CCEA, 2002) and employ an investigative and problem-solving approach to the study of the subject. In addition to providing a suitable route for progression for candidates completing GCSE Applied Business, the course of study prescribed by these specifications can also reasonably be undertaken by candidates beginning their formal education in the subject at post-16 level. Progression through the Advanced Subsidiary GCE and Advanced GCE, through either a single or double award, may provide a suitable foundation for study of the subject, or related subjects, in further and higher education.

Key Skills are integral to the specifications and the main opportunities to provide evidence for the separate Key Skills qualification are indicated.

These specifications are supported by users and a range of professional institutes and further and higher education institutions. These include NTOs (National Training Organisations) which support training and development in many different sectors and have been consulted during the development of these specifications.

OCR has taken great care in the preparation of these specifications and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind.

3.3 Entry requirements for the qualification

Candidates entering this course should have achieved a general educational level equivalent to Level 2 in the National Qualifications Framework, or Levels 7/8 of the National Curriculum. Skills in numeracy/ mathematics, literacy/ English and information and communication technology will be particularly relevant. However, there is no prior knowledge required for these specifications.

Prior learning, skills and aptitudes particularly relevant include those learnt in:

- GCSE Business Studies
- GCSE in Applied Business
- OCR National Level 1 in Business
- OCR National Level 2 in Business.



3.4 Age of candidates

A minimum of 16 years old.

3.5 Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

All units require 60 guided learning hours (GLH) each of delivery time. Thus:

Advanced Subsidiary GCE awards require 180 GLH; Advanced Subsidiary GCE double awards require 360 GLH; Advanced GCE awards require 360; Advanced GCE double awards require 720 GLH.

3.6 Content and structure of the qualification

Table 3: OCR A level in Applied Business (Double Award) unit structure

Unit	Title	Level	Mode of assessment	Mandatory/optional
Unit 1	Creating a Marketing Proposal (F240)	AS	Portfolio – internally assessed	Mandatory
Unit 2	Recruitment in the Workplace (F241)	AS	Portfolio – internally assessed	Mandatory
Unit 3	Understanding the Business Environment (F242)	AS	External	Mandatory
Unit 4	The Impact of Customer Service (F243)	AS	External	Mandatory
Unit 5	ICT Provision in a Business (F244)	AS	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 2 ¹
Unit 6	Running an Enterprise Activity (F245)	AS	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 2
Unit 7	Financial Providers and Products (F246)	AS	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 2
Unit 8	Understanding Production in Business (F247)	AS	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 2
Unit 9	Strategic Decision Making (F248)	A2	External	Mandatory
Unit 10	A Business Plan for the Entrepreneur (F249)	A2	Portfolio – internally assessed	Mandatory
Unit 11	Managerial and Supervisory Roles (F250)	A2	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 3 ²
Unit 12	Launching a Business Online (F251)	A2	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 3
Unit 13	Promotion in Action (F252)	A2	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 3
Unit 14	Constructing a Financial Strategy (F253)	A2	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 3
Unit 15	Launching a New Product Or Service In Europe (F254)	A2	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 3
Unit 16	Training and Development (F255)	A2	Portfolio – internally assessed	Option 3
Unit 17	Business Law (F256)	A2	External	Option 1 ³
Unit 18	Managing Risk in the Workplace (F257)	A2	External	Option 1

¹ Candidates must choose two options marked Option 2

² Candidates must choose three options marked Option 3

³ Candidates must choose one option from those marked Option 1



3.7 Assessment – procedures, methods and levels

Candidates for these qualifications will be expected to demonstrate the following in a range of vocationally-related contexts:

Table 4: OCR A level assessment objectives

Assessment Objective		Description	Weighting
AO1	Knowledge, skills and understanding	Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.	25-35%
AO2	Application of knowledge, skills and understanding	Candidates apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.	25-5%
AO3	Research and analysis	Candidates use appropriate methods in order to obtain and select information from a range of sources to analyse business problems.	15-25%
AO4	Evaluation	Candidates evaluate evidence to reach reasoned judgements.	15-25%

For the Advanced GCE (Double Award) eight units are assessed internally, through a teacher-assessed portfolio and four units are assessed externally with the assessment set and marked by OCR. These twelve units are equally sized and equally weighted.

External assessment forms 33% of the overall assessment for the qualification, Advanced GCE (Double Award) candidates taking four units of external assessment. External assessments are 1 hour 30 minutes at AS and two hours at A2. Unit 3: Understanding the business environment, Unit 4: The impact of customer service and Unit 9: Strategic decision-making have pre-released case study material which will be available to centres (once they have made their provisional candidate entries) approximately six weeks prior to the examination dates.

Internal assessment forms 67% of the qualifications. Internally assessed units take the form of a portfolio of work designed to enable the candidate to demonstrate understanding of the content of the unit. Each internal assessment is set by the centre to OCR guidelines, is internally marked and externally moderated by OCR.

Synoptic assessment at Advanced GCE is designed to ensure that candidates have a good understanding of the subject as a whole, and are able to address issues within the subject from a range of perspectives and in an integrated way. The emphasis is on strategic understanding and on the ability to draw evidence together from any relevant areas of the specifications. Assessment focuses on the breadth, depth and quality of candidates' analysis and evaluation. Synoptic assessment will involve candidates bringing together, and making connections between, the areas of knowledge, skills and understanding covered within the specifications and applying this when carrying out a business investigation. A level of synoptic understanding is clearly a requirement of Unit 9: Strategic decision-making and Unit 10: A business



plan for the entrepreneur although there are opportunities for developing synoptic understanding in other optional units throughout the course.

The performance descriptions for GCE Applied Business aim to describe learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be shown by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for the AS and A2. They illustrate the expectations at these boundaries for the AS and A2 at qualification level; they have not been written at specification or unit level

At unit level an OCR unit recording sheet clearly states the candidate performance required to meet each specific assessment objective for every unit. Every performance descriptor, described on the unit recording sheet, is relates to a specific assessment objective.

Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement at awarding meetings where the grade A/B and E/U boundaries will be set by examiners using professional judgement. This judgement will reflect the quality of the candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence.

Table 5: OCR A level performance indicators

	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	Quality of written communication
Assessment Objectives for both AS GCE and Advanced GCE	Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.	Candidates apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content and relevant business skills.	Candidates use appropriate methods in order to obtain and select information from a range of sources to analyse business problems.	Candidates evaluate evidence to reach reasoned judgements.	
AS					
AS A/B boundary performance descriptions	<p>Candidates demonstrate depth of knowledge and understanding of a range of key business concepts across the AS specification.</p> <p>Candidates demonstrate understanding of the benefits of relevant business skills and how and when these</p>	<p>Candidates apply effectively depth of knowledge and understanding of a range of key business concepts across the AS specification.</p> <p>Candidates apply effectively relevant business skills to business contexts. Candidates</p>	<p>Candidates select relevant and up-to-date information from a range of sources.</p> <p>Candidates use appropriate numerical and/or non-numerical techniques on the selected information to analyse business issues, problems or opportunities.</p>	<p>Candidates demonstrate evaluation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritising evidence and arguments • showing judgement in the selection and presentation of findings • presenting supported conclusions • making appropriate 	<p>Candidates use written expression which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conveys appropriate meaning • uses appropriate specialist vocabulary.



	can be used.	apply effectively appropriate numerical techniques to business contexts.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recommendations. 	
AS E/U boundary performance descriptions	<p>Candidates demonstrate perhaps with significant omissions knowledge and some understanding of a range of business concepts contained in the AS specification.</p> <p>Candidates demonstrate perhaps with significant omissions an understanding of relevant business skills and when these can be used.</p>	<p>Candidates apply knowledge and some understanding of a range of business concepts contained in the AS specification.</p> <p>Candidates apply relevant business skills to business contexts.</p> <p>Candidates apply appropriate numerical techniques to business contexts.</p>	<p>Candidates collect relevant and up-to-date information from a limited range of sources.</p> <p>Candidates use appropriate numerical and/or non-numerical techniques on the collected information to partially analyse business issues, problems or opportunities.</p>	<p>Candidates demonstrate evaluation by using some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritising evidence • presenting conclusions • making recommendations. 	<p>Candidates use written expression which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is adequate to convey meaning; • may be expressed in a non-specialist way.
A2					
A/B Boundary performance description	<p>Candidates demonstrate depth of knowledge and understanding of a range of key business concepts across the AS and A2 specifications, as appropriate.</p> <p>Candidates demonstrate understanding of the benefits of the relevant business skills, including higher level skills, and how and when these can be used</p>	<p>Candidates apply effectively in-depth knowledge and understanding of a range of key business concepts across the AS and A2 specifications, as appropriate.</p> <p>Candidates apply effectively relevant business skills, including higher level skills; appropriate numerical techniques to business contexts.</p>	<p>Candidates select relevant and up-to-date information from a range of sources.</p> <p>Candidates use appropriate numerical and/or non-numerical techniques on the selected information to analyse complex business issues, problems or opportunities.</p> <p>Candidates develop a business strategy.</p>	<p>Candidates demonstrate evaluation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritising evidence and arguments • showing judgement in the selection and presentation of findings • presenting supported conclusions • making appropriate recommendations. <p>Candidates justify business strategies.</p>	<p>Candidates use written expression which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conveys appropriate meaning • uses appropriate specialist vocabulary.



E/U Boundary performance description	<p>Candidates demonstrate perhaps with significant omissions knowledge and some understanding of a range of business concepts contained in the AS and A2 specs, as appropriate.</p> <p>Candidates demonstrate perhaps with significant omissions an understanding of relevant business skills, including higher level skills, and when these can be used.</p>	<p>Candidates apply effectively knowledge and some understanding of a range of business concepts contained in the AS and A2 specs, as appropriate.</p> <p>Candidates apply effectively relevant business skills, including higher level skills; appropriate numerical techniques to business contexts.</p>	<p>Candidates collect relevant and up-to-date information from a range of sources.</p> <p>Candidates use appropriate numerical and/or non-numerical techniques on the collected information to partially analyse complex business issues, problems or opportunities.</p> <p>Candidates outline a business strategy.</p>	<p>Candidates demonstrate evaluation by using some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritising evidence and arguments • making judgements • presenting conclusions; • making recommendations. 	<p>Candidates use written expression which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is adequate to convey meaning • may be expressed in a non-specialist way.
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3.8 Grading

In order that candidates' performance can be compared across units and across sessions, a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) is used to aggregate the results of individual assessment units to generate qualification grades.

Once the raw mark and raw mark boundaries for each unit have been established, the raw marks are converted to the UMS by OCR and reported to candidates as a uniform mark out of 100. Uniform marks correspond to unit grades as follows:

Unit grade	A	B	C	D	E
UMS (max 100)	80-100	70-79	60-69	50-59	40-49

The uniform marks awarded for each unit are then aggregated and overall qualification grades awarded against pre-determined intervals.

Advanced GCE (Double Award):

Overall Grade	AA	AB	BB	BC	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE
UMS (max 1200)	960-1200	900-959	840-899	780-839	720-779	660-719	600-659	540-599	480-539

Grades are awarded on a scale of AA to EE (for the Double Award) and reported on certificates. A* is not available for any of the current Applied specifications, but will



become so when the specification is re-accredited for first teaching in September 2009.

Candidates who fail to achieve the standard for a grade EE are awarded a Uniform Mark in the range 0-239 for the Advanced Subsidiary GCE (Double Award) and 0-479 for the Advanced GCE (Double Award) and will be recorded as U (unclassified). This does not lead to a certificate.

3.9 QA systems and code of practice

OCR requires centres to implement a programme of internal moderation for all coursework units before portfolios are submitted to OCR for external moderation by sample. Question papers (for externally assessed units) and coursework portfolios (for internally moderated units) are set, assessed and awarded using rigorous systems and extensive processes that are fully in line with the GCSE, GCE, GNVQ and AEA Code of practice (April 2008).



SECTION 4: THE WORK OF THE EXPERT GROUP

4.1 Prior to the meeting

Prior to this meeting some preliminary work was carried out. This included a mapping of the ABC Diploma in Fashion Retail against the OCR GCE A level Double Award (DA) in Applied Business; reports from the HE representatives highlighting similarities and differences between the two qualifications; and comparative studies from a representative from each awarding body. Specifically members of the group to compare aims, content, study hours, relative size and assessment models of the ABC Diploma in Fashion Retail and that of the OCR GCE A level DA in Applied Business.

4.2 The Expert Group meeting

The Expert Group met on one occasion on 8 October 2008 to examine and discuss the evidence listed in Appendix 2 and the preparatory work completed by group members. The meeting opened with presentations from each of the awarding bodies to provide the group with an overview of the similarities and differences between the two qualifications and to provide an opportunity for questions and clarification.

4.3 Comparison of aims

The Group considered the aims and purpose of the qualifications and discussed the relative strengths and weakness of these aims in terms of their utility for progression to HE. Table 6 summarises the similarities and differences that were highlighted by the Group, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each qualification.

Table 6: Comparing aims

	OCR A level DA	ABC Fashion Diploma
Aims	Vocationally-related Generalist Progression to HE or employment Focused on progression to higher education (HE) Theory/knowledge-based 'Building' students who are business specialists Management theory	Vocationally-related Specialist Progression to HE or employment Focused on progression to employment Experiential/practical-based Emphasis on professional development Building students who are fashion retail specialists Interpersonal skills
Strengths	Assimilation of knowledge Problem-solving approach More general business knowledge Management theory Preparation for study Numeracy Entrepreneurial Range of theory Transferable skills Contextualising knowledge Critical evaluation	Application of skills Problem-solving approach More focus on specific fashion retail Application of management styles Responsive to retail environment Professional development Contextualising knowledge Management styles in the 'real' world High degree of flexibility Creativity (although some opinion that too much creativity can be a weakness)



Weaknesses	Limitations on work experience and experiential knowledge Too prescriptive Less focus on interpersonal skills	Lack of consistency re: work experience (eg dependent on individual manager assigned to student) Lack of prescription in providing guidance for centres and students in evidencing skills
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During the explanations of the Awards given by the representatives, and following the first exercise, it became apparent that there was similarity in the aims of the qualifications, and that both qualifications have progression to HE as an aim, although to differing extents. It was felt that the A level DA was more focused on a student progressing into HE due to the theoretical and transferable nature of the skills acquired, whereas the ABC Diploma was more focused on a student entering into employment due to the practical and experiential nature of the qualification. The Group agreed that where one qualification excelled in one area, the other balanced it out with a focus on another skills set appropriate to its aim. Ultimately, the differences in the aims hinges on the differences between general and vocational; the OCR A level Business DA offers detailed content about what a student needs to know theoretically, whereas the ABC Fashion Retail Diploma has a focus on practice supported by appropriate theory as required.

The Group was interested in the progression routes that previous Diploma students had taken into HE and the Head of the Fashion Retail Academy agreed to provide some examples of examples:

- Lincoln University - English Degree
- Central St Martins– BA Fashion Design and Knitwear
- Nottingham Trent University– BA Fashion Marketing
- London College of Fashion – BA Fashion Management
- London College of Fashion - BA Fashion Journalism
- London College of Fashion - FdA Fashion Buying and Merchandising
- Westminster University – BA Fashion Buying
- Westminster University – BA Fashion Merchandising

The Expert Group established that the OCR A level DA and the ABC Fashion retail Diploma qualifications were similar in structure (in that they are unit-based) and, to a large extent, much of the content could be mapped, particularly in terms of key skills although there was considered to be more numeracy skills in the A level DA. It was felt that both qualifications have underlying similar themes; the differences exist in the way in which the themes are handled with slightly different focuses and aims.

At this stage, the HE representatives were asked to comment on the skills that they feel are necessary and important for students entering into HE, and the group was invited to consider the extent to which these skills are reflected in the two qualifications. Skills included were:



- articulation and formulation of arguments and ability to critique
- ability to apply knowledge
- provision of evidence of above
- analysis/research skills
- creativity and enterprise
- literacy and numeracy skills.

Whilst it was argued that both qualifications develop the above skills, it was felt that they were more explicitly evidenced in the A level qualification whereas they were more implicit within the Diploma. There was general agreement that this could be attributed to the differing focuses of the two qualifications, where the Diploma focuses on more specialist skills required for working in the sector. One example of this is the evidencing of numeracy skills. Whilst Application of Number is made explicit in the A level specification, ABC representatives felt that it was present in the ABC syllabus but implicit within areas such as merchandising and ICT. There was consensus that this could be overcome by adapting the assessment to ensure that the above skills were more explicitly evidenced.

4.4 Determining size

A. Comparison of Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

The recommended study hours for the A level DA are 20% greater than the Diploma. The OCR A level DA is 720 GLHs compared with 600 GLHs for the ABC Diploma. The ABC Diploma is made up of the following five compulsory units:

Unit 1 60 GLH

Unit 2 60 GLH

Unit 3 90 GLH

Unit 4 60 GLH

Unit 5 90 GLH.

Plus four additional options with 60 GLH/unit.

The OCR A level DA consists of six compulsory units and six optional units, each with 60 GLH.

B. Breadth and depth of content coverage

Candidates taking the OCR A level in Applied Business DA have to study a mixture of core (mandatory) and specialist (optional) units, selected from the eighteen units described in the specification.

The ABC Fashion Retail Diploma requires the completion of nine units, five of which are mandatory and four optional. Meeting all the learning outcomes and knowledge requirements of the nine units, and completing the work-based experience is



necessary to pass the ABC Diploma. However, the grading of the overall award (Pass / Merit/ Distinction) is based solely on a project undertaken in Unit 5: Professional Development in Retail Management. This is internally set and assessed, and externally moderated. All other units are internally assessed and ungraded (Pass / fail).

It was felt that a large amount of the content is common to both qualifications, but that the Diploma has a narrow reference to ‘fashion retail management’ whereas the A level DA has a wide reference as a ‘broad introduction to the business sector’. The Diploma has a specific vocational emphasis reflecting its closer link to the industry’s and the SSC’s requirements. It is designed to relate to the National Occupational Standards in the sector that in turn form the basis of the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). Whilst it does not claim to deliver occupational competence in the sector, it does integrate learning and occupational practice through practical application via in-store and academic activities.

As was identified in the comparison of the aims, the themes of the two qualifications are treated more academically/ theoretically in the A level DA and more practically/ vocationally in the Diploma.

Since there was agreement that there was general commonality across the themes and the content, and that it was difficult to map exact units since the focus of the qualifications’ subject areas within themes was different, the group moved on to consider the differences between the assessment models since it was felt that this constituted the critical point of comparison for the purposes of this Expert Group.

4.5 Estimating relative demand – comparison of assessment models

The Group began this exercise by building on the preparatory work which mapped the assessment objectives of the two qualifications as illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7: Comparing assessment objectives

	OCR A level DA	ABC Fashion Diploma
AO1	Knowledge, skills and understanding	Maps to ABC Units 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,12
AO2	Application of knowledge and understanding	Maps to ABC Units 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,12
AO3	Research and analysis	Maps to ABC Units 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,12
AO4	Evaluation	Maps to ABC Units 2,3,4,5,6,7

It was felt that although assessment objectives could be mapped up to a point, drawing exact parallels would be impossible since the ABC qualification has a unique focus within the sector with integrated learning through practical application. This is also reflected in assessment methodology combining both practical industry-based assessment along with traditional academic methods. The Diploma assessment objectives are more closely aligned with NVQ objectives, relating to personal and



professional performance, including development and exploration, personal and professional progression and practical and technical skills, and could therefore be considered to be ‘soft’ objectives linking directly to future employment prospects. In contrast, the A level DA has ‘hard’ objectives relating to a knowledge base, including the demonstration and application of knowledge, analysis and evaluation, primarily rewarding candidates for developing learning skills that link directly to HE or further study.

The Group compared the two assessment models, with a focus on the mandatory units for each qualification. The resulting overview is illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8: Comparing assessment models

Award	Unit	Content	Mode	Detail	Weighting
OCR A level DA	1 (AS)	Marketing proposal	Portfolio Internally assessed	Written & orally assessed against grid	Equal weighting 1/12
	2 (AS)	Recruitment	Report Internally assessed		Equal weighting 1/12
	3 (AS)	Business environment	1.5 hr exam Externally assessed	Scenario-based examination. Scenario seen in advance. No notes allowed to be taken in to the examination.	Equal weighting 1/12
	4 (AS)	Customer service	1.5 hr exam Externally assessed		Equal weighting 1/12
	9 (A2)	Strategic decision- making	2 hr exam Externally assessed		Equal weighting 1/12
	10 (A2)	Business plan	Portfolio Internally assessed	Coursework assessed against grid	Equal weighting 1/12
ABC Diploma	1	Management skills	Portfolio Internally assessed	Min. 1,000 words assignment + evaluation log	60 GLH
	2	Store operations	Portfolio Internally assessed	Non-prescribed – written or portfolio/ personal log	60 GLH
	3	Buying/ merchandising	Portfolio Internally assessed	As above (can include powerpoint)	60 GLH
	4	Visual merchandising	Portfolio Internally assessed	Brief from a store – practical mock-shop	60 GLH
	5	Professional development in retail management	Internally assessed portfolio of evidence, externally moderated by ABC. Independent assessment – final major project internally set, independently assessed with external moderation by ABC. Summative assessment	Final major project. Statement of intent. Production of an artefact.	90 GLH



Further detail on content and assessment of the units was provided by representatives from both qualifications, and an opportunity provided for the HE representatives to comment. Both qualifications combine some synoptic elements; the A level DA in units 9 and 10, and the ABC Diploma in unit 5. With the Diploma, units 1 to 4 are undertaken simultaneously in a pyramid structure, and whilst all have to be passed to enable progression onto unit 5, there was some concern amongst the HE representatives that students could achieve low passes in any (or all) of these 4 units and still have an overall outcome of a Distinction based on the final unit 5.

For the ABC Diploma, all learners must complete a portfolio of evidence that shows achievement of all the relevant learning outcomes and knowledge requirements for mandatory units 1 to 5 and four optional units that essentially reports on their work experience. Evidence is not prescribed but may include a number of methods, including a presentation, oral reports, a reflective diary, case studies, photographic evidence or witness statements. There was a general feeling that this method of evaluation was open to inconsistencies, being heavily dependent on the centre where the student was studying and could result in gaps in evidence of achievement.

The HE representatives agreed that the nature of the evidence presented does suggest articulation with certain courses in HE, for example, fashion design, fashion technology but would be insufficient in preparing students for other courses, such as fashion-buying for retail. Furthermore, it was felt that the types of assessment applied to the ABC Diploma lacked an appropriate amount of written work, which reduces the qualification's utility for HE.

Although the overall grade awarded by the centre is indicative and has to be externally moderated, the HE representatives felt that whilst the assessment evidence grid was helpful in detailing level of achievement for those graded with Merit or Distinction, more transparency was needed to enable HE to understand the synoptic grade awarded to the qualification. This was in comparison to the A level which has learning outcomes, methods of assessment and mark bands for each unit. ABC units are studied simultaneously and assessment is intended to be through holistic assignments, which can span more than one unit where relevant. Hence understanding the extent to which candidates have addressed the learning outcomes would require greater clarity on the part of ABC.

In summary, the HE representatives recognised the difficulties for ABC in continuing to meet a need identified by industry, as well as providing a progression route to HE. It was also acknowledged that there have already been some extensive changes made to the Diploma specification over the last few years, including more streamlining and the assessment of a more varied skill set. However, it was felt that



the models of assessment for the ABC Diploma are weakly described and whilst they could be appropriate for HE, this was not evidenced clearly in the current models.

In order to assure HE staff of the ABC Diploma's utility to progression to HE, it was suggested that the exact nature of the knowledge, skills and understanding a learner needs to develop, be outlined more clearly in the specification. Likewise, more evidence was needed in the specification of students being required to develop arguments and engage in evaluation, analysis and synthesis of knowledge through extended writing.

4.6 Estimating relative demand – comparing examination requirements

Both qualifications have distinctly different assessment models. The OCR A level DA is more synoptic, with the opportunity for candidates to re-take examinations. The ABC Diploma does not allow students to re-take but has a 'referral' system where an individual can re-submit work but the overall grade for the qualification is capped at a Pass grade.

The OCR A level DA provides teachers with rigorous marking guides which aim to ensure consistency, whereas the ABC Diploma provides marking instructions which could allow for the exercise of professional discretion. Again, this was a concern for HE who need to be confident that grades are awarded on a consistent and equal basis.

Whilst the grade descriptors for the two qualifications are almost identical, the OCR A level DA is knowledge-based whereas the ABC Diploma is more skills-based. These differences are reflected in the modes of assessment employed within each qualification. It was therefore difficult to compare relative demand based on examination requirements due to the extent of these differences.

4.7 Estimating relative demand – comparison of candidate work

The Group had the opportunity to look at examples of candidate evidence for the ABC Diploma and reconvened to discuss this during the afternoon. Further clarification was provided by the ABC representatives so that the Group was fully aware of what they were viewing. The candidate evidence was drawn solely from unit 5 portfolios.

The HE representatives were positive in that they felt that the candidate work represented a range of outputs and creative thinking was evident in abundance. However, they would like to see evidence from the other units, particularly on report-writing abilities, referencing and critical analysis. One example of this was that whilst report-writing skills is evident in unit 1, it is not evidenced in unit 5. Whilst the professional judgement of the ABC representatives was recognised, it was



suggested that more marking and assessment guidance was needed for centres, to ensure that HE could be confident that the skills necessary for progression to HE were being demonstrated. This was particularly the case for critical thinking where there was a distinct lack of written material.

There was discussion relating to the articulation of key skills and the Group felt that more evidence of the *application* of key skills was needed. The candidate work viewed at the meeting lacked any evidence of key skills. It was suggested that it should have a more tangible presence across the units which could be more clearly demonstrated in unit 5 where candidates would put forward their 'best evidence'. Again, it was recommended that centres be provided with clear guidance on this to ensure that such evidencing is carried out.

At this stage of the meeting, the Group was provided with a summary of the discussions:

- There is much to be commended regarding the newly revised ABC Fashion Retail Diploma specification, particularly the skills, knowledge and creativity elements.
- The ABC Fashion Retail Diploma was praised by HE for developing self-awareness and personal development skills.
- The ABC Fashion Retail Diploma is essentially a vocational qualification which develops vocationally-related skills valuable to employers and some skills necessary for HE.
- There does exist a gap in the acquirement of academic skills, such as analysis, synthesis and critical evaluation. Although many vocational qualifications do not specifically assess these areas, it was felt that for purposes of utility for progression to HE, there needed to be more focus on evidencing and demonstrating these skills.
- There is a need to evidence key skills more explicitly within a context.
- The type of assessment being used does not necessarily provide opportunity to demonstrate skills required for HE progression such as essay-writing.

4.8 Domain scoring

The Group was presented with the combined Tariff domain scores which had been part of the preparatory work. The mean scores are portrayed in Figures 1 and 2:



Figure 1: Tariff domain scores – ABC Diploma

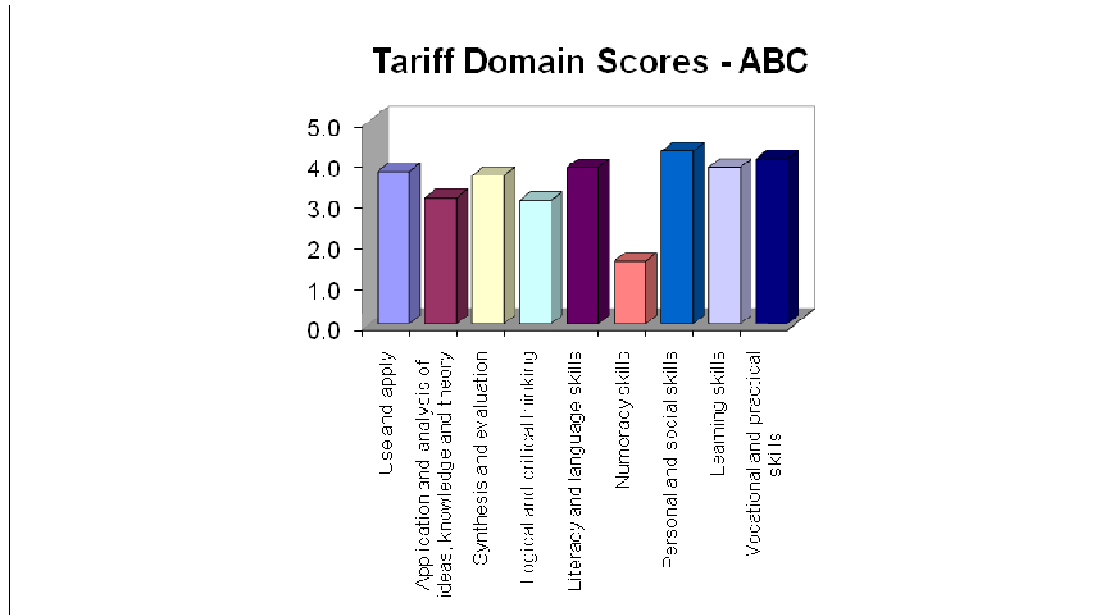
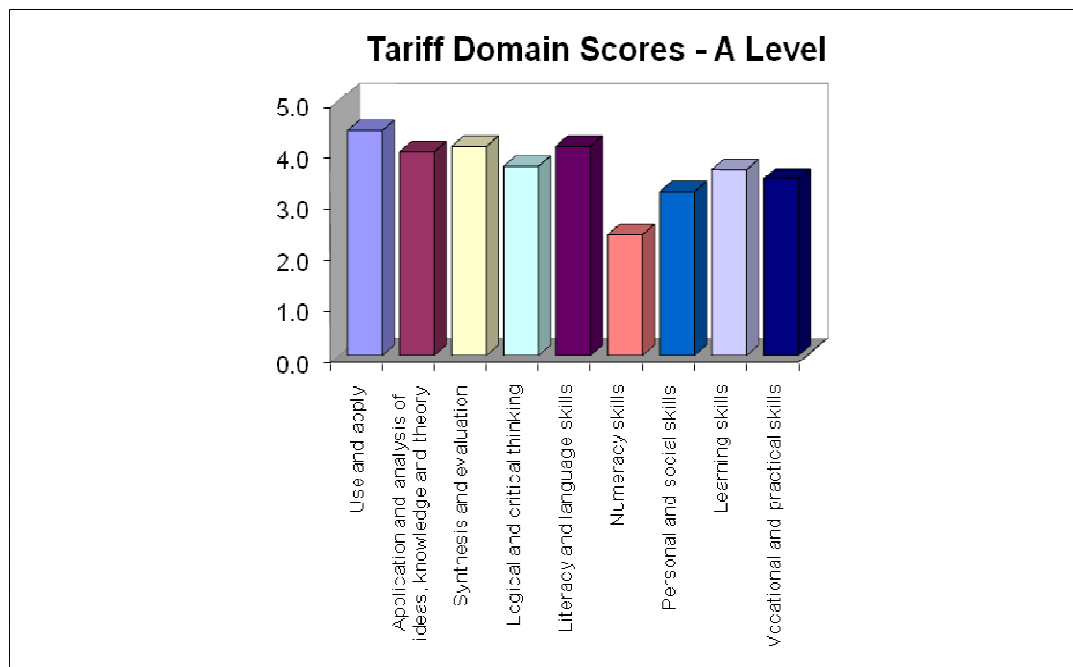


Figure 2: Tariff domain scores – GCE A level



The largest differences were as follows:

Greater evidence in A level:	Use and apply Application and analysis of ideas, knowledge and theory Synthesis and evaluation.
Greater evidence in ABC Diploma:	Personal and social skills Vocational and practical skills.

The Group agreed that the charts were a fair reflection of the discussions that had been had throughout the day. Furthermore, they reflect the real differences between the qualifications as discussed in the previous sections; in particular the weaker development of skills traditionally considered essential for supporting progression into HE in the ABC Diploma. The scores validate the conclusions reached at the end of the previous section.

4.10 Recommended allocation of UCAS Tariff points

Table 9 shows the UCAS Tariff points awarded in 2006 and the suggested allocation of UCAS Tariff points in 2008 for the ABC Fashion Retail Diploma.

Table 9: Tariff points allocation

OCR A level DA	ABC Diploma (2006 allocation)	ABC Diploma (2008 allocation)	Diploma classification
AA (240 UTPs)			
BB (200 UTPs)			
CC (160 UTPs)	160 UTPs	160 UTPs	Distinction
DD (120 UTPs)	120 UTPs	120 UTPs	Merit
EE (80 UTPs)	80 UTPs	80 UTPs	Pass

In light of the discussions and in considering the utility of the ABC Fashion Retail Diploma for progression to HE, the Group agreed that the current allocation of UCAS Tariff points was fair and should remain at the same level.

It was agreed that the content of the ABC Fashion Retail Diploma was appropriate and that the recommendations made on the necessary changes to assessment be taken forward by ABC whilst protecting the Skills Academy base. The Group would reconvene in 2010 with assessment changes having been implemented and the Tariff points would be reconsidered in light of these changes.



APPENDIX 1 BIOGRAPHIES OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEMBERS

UCAS COMPARABILITY STUDY

Outline Biography of Expert Group Member

Name: **Shalina Alabaksh**

Current Position: Retail Consultant Business Partner

Organisation: Reflexxion

Qualifications: BA Hons Textiles and Surface Pattern; Certificate in Management Level 4; T.D.L.B., H.R.D. Level 4; Key Skills Practitioners Award Level 3; D34 – Internal Verifiers Award; D32 & D33 – Assessors Award

Brief Biography

Business Partner for Reflexxion, acting as consultant for ABC Awards, delivering commercial courses to ISB (International School of Brussels); evaluating Foundation Degree in Retail to ensure suitability for the sector; designing, creating and facilitating Retail Ambassador Training for Employers; and supporting Cancer Research UK in designing their new Visual Merchandising proposition throughout Core and Premium Shops.

Previous experience includes roles as Learning Project Manager, Retail and Franchise Group for Head office at Marks and Spence plc, Learning and Development Manager for Skillsmart Retail, and Learning Programmes Manager for Selfridges and Co.



UCAS COMPARABILITY STUDY

Outline Biography of Expert Group Member

Name: **Claire Allen**
Current Position: Course Leader: BA(Hons) Fashion, Media & Promotion
Organisation: University of Huddersfield
Qualifications: Msc Marketing Management, BA(Hons) 3D Design - Interiors,
PGcert HE, BTEC National Diploma Display Design

Brief Biography

Course Leader BA(Hons) Fashion, Media & Promotion - 2003 to present
designed and developed course in UK

Final year tutor, admissions tutor, designated academic liaison officer for Franchises.

Designed, developed and delivered course in Hong Kong 2005 to 2008.

Senior Lecturer in Design Management, Fashion Promotion and Branding, Consumer Behaviour, Marketing & Communications, Managing Creativity and the Creative process.

Subject Leader of Design Business subject group 2007 to 2008 (9 month secondment)

Courses in Design Business subject group - BA(Hons) Fashion, Media & Promotion, BA(Hons) Fashion & Textiles Buying/Management/Retail, BA(Hons) Advertising, Media & Design management, Franchise programmes at NAFA Singapore and Caritas Francis Hsu Hong Kong.

I am a panel member of the School of Art, Design and Architecture Validation panel
Member of Subject review
Member of School Teaching & Learning committee
University Quality Standards panel member.

Conferences attended:

Intersections 07 Design conference 2007; Fashion Industry Branding & Marketing Forum Drapers, London 2005; Design Management - Strategy & innovation DMI, London 2004; Brand Management - DMI, Vancouver 2003; Guest juror for Braun Internation design competition 2007.

Marketer, Project Manager, Designer TGAC, Kevin Morley communications

I worked as a designer and marketer for over ten years. I designed for blue chip companies and agencies three dimensional POP units, graphic POS and graphic promotions material for retail, events and exhibitions. As a project manager I designed and organised national retail POS campaigns taking responsibility for progressing projects from design, artwork, client approval to print buying through to distribution.



UCAS COMPARABILITY STUDY**Outline Biography of Expert Group Member**

Name: **Sue Langton**
 Current Position: Qualifications Development Manager
 Organisation: ABC Awards
 Qualifications: BA Hons History, PGCE

Brief Biography

Sue spent 28 years in the teaching profession in the secondary sector, 25 of those years in one school in Buckinghamshire. She taught history at GCSE and Advanced Level and was instrumental in introducing vocational programmes into school, leading the Business Studies Team. During her years as a teacher, she held a variety of management positions within school including Head of Department, Co-ordinator for Vocational programmes, Assessor and Internal Verifier, Head of Sixth Form, CPD Co-ordinator and was a member of the Senior Management Team.

She was seconded for two years to work as County Advisory Teacher for Vocational programmes in schools in Buckinghamshire. She also co-ordinated a consortium of four schools and an FE college in Aylesbury.

In 2004, she decided that she wanted a new challenge where she could make use of her experience in education, whilst developing new areas of skills and knowledge. She became a Qualifications Development Officer at ABC Awards. ABC is one of the largest vocational awarding bodies in the United Kingdom. Its portfolio of qualifications includes National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs).

Many of ABC's VRQs are Technical Certificates for Apprenticeship programmes, Additional and/or Specialist Learning for the 14-19 Diplomas and qualifications within one of more of the four Foundation Learning Tier Progression Pathways

Sue has represented ABC Awards at events involving QCA and SSC's. She has worked with a wide variety of specialists in the development of qualifications. from Entry Level to Level 6.

In 2006 she was appointed Qualifications Development Manager, leading the ABC Awards Qualifications Development Team. She has continued to represent ABC Awards at a variety of fora. She works closely with other members of the Directorate of Business Development in moving ABC Awards forward.



UCAS COMPARABILITY STUDY

Outline Biography of Expert Group Member

Name: **Diane Mitchell**
Current Position: Chief Examiner OCR GCE Applied Business Double Award
Organisation: OCR
Qualifications: BEd Hons Education and Business Studies
TDLB 32,33,34 and 36

Brief Biography

Qualified as a teacher of business studies in 1987 and now have more than 20 years experience in secondary and post-sixteen education. Currently Head of Business Studies at a comprehensive school with sixth form in the north-east of England, offering academic and vocational courses in business, economics, law and accounting. Special responsibility for sixth-form recruitment, vocational internal verification, enterprise across the curriculum, work experience placements, and UCAS applications.

Extensive involvement with examination and vocational assessment work spanning 15 years, including work as an assistant examiner, team leader, moderator, scrutineer, trainer and qualification reviser. Currently Chief Examiner for the OCR GCE Applied Business Double Award Qualification and Principal Examiner for the Business Law and Strategic Decision Making papers.

Director and Company Secretary of Reliable Energy Inspections Ltd.



APPENDIX 2 THE EVIDENCE CONSIDERED

ABC Fashion Retail

Specification

GCE Applied Business A level

Specification

Question Papers Units 3, 4, 9, 17 and 18

Mark Scheme

Examiners Report

