

OCR Level 1 NVQ in Retail Skills
OCR Level 2 NVQ in Retail Skills
OCR Level 3 NVQ in Retail (Management)
OCR Level 3 NVQ in Retail (Sales Professional)
OCR Level 3 NVQ in Retail (Visual Merchandising)

What is an NVQ?

An NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) is a qualification that is achieved through the assessment of competence (that is the skills, knowledge and understanding a person has) in a work situation. NVQs are based on National Occupational Standards. These standards describe the level and breadth of performance that is expected of all those carrying out the duties that the NVQ covers. These NVQs are based on the National Occupational Standards developed by Skillsmart Retail the government approved Sector Skills Council for the retail sector.

The awarding body for this NVQ is Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) and the regulatory body is the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

Who are these NVQs for?

These NVQs are work-oriented and are suitable for those who have current real work experience within the retail sector. They are open to candidates of any age, of either gender and there are no entry barriers on grounds of race, creed or previous academic attainment or learning.

OCR Level 1 NVQ in Retail Skills

This NVQ replaces the Level 1 NVQ in Distributive Operations, for those candidates working in a retail environment. It comprises units which are based on the new National Occupational Standards developed by Skillsmart Retail. It is designed to reflect the work of candidates working in a retail environment. It is most appropriate for candidates operating at a basic level in their work role. It is suitable for candidates who are: new to the retail sector; following training programmes; following training programmes in preparation for work; school leavers.

OCR Level 2 NVQ in Retail Skills

This qualification comprises units which are based on the new National Occupational Standards developed by Skillsmart Retail. It will be appropriate for candidates who are: already competent in basic retail skills and require recognition for a wider range of abilities in retailing; progressing from the Level 1 NVQ in Retail Skills; wishing to demonstrate competence gained previously in retailing or associated industries.

OCR Level 3 NVQs in Retail

These qualifications comprise units which are based on the new National Occupational Standards developed by Skillsmart Retail. They follow the qualification structures developed by Skillsmart Retail and offer candidates a choice of three pathways - Sales Professional, Visual Merchandising and Management. The NVQs are designed to reflect the work of those candidates employed in a senior sales assistant or supervisory/team leader role in the retail sector. They will be appropriate for candidates who are: already competent in a significant variety of retail work activities and requiring recognition for a wider and more complex range of abilities; progressing from the Level 2 NVQ in Retail Skills; wishing to demonstrate competence gained previously in retailing or associated industries.

What is their purpose?

These NVQs aim to accredit the skills of retail staff and those preparing to work in the retail sector, against the National Occupational Standards for retail, developed by Skillsmart Retail following extensive research into the various role requirements. The standards will provide a nationally accredited focus for retail training and individual personal development activity.

What are the benefits of these NVQs?

The National Occupational Standards not only provide the way towards an improved understanding of the role in retail but also a benchmark for good practice and personal development.

The results will be seen in:

- Improved organisational image
- Increased motivation
- Raised standards
- Recognition of personal competence
- Nationally recognised qualifications

What is the structure of these NVQs?

The table shows how each of the qualifications is constructed.

OCR Level 1 NVQ in Retail Skills

To achieve this qualification, candidates must achieve 5 units made up of 1 mandatory unit and 4 optional units. Candidates can also undertake additional units, although these are not required to complete the qualification.

OCR Level 2 NVQ in Retail Skills

To achieve this qualification, candidates must achieve 6 units made up of 1 mandatory unit and 5 optional units. Candidates can also undertake additional units, although these are not required to complete the qualification.

OCR Level 3 NVQs in Retail

To achieve these qualifications, candidates must achieve 6 units made up of 1 mandatory unit and 5 optional units. Pathways are available in the areas of: sales professional, visual merchandising and management. Candidates can also undertake additional units, although these are not required to complete the qualification.

Who is involved in the delivery of these NVQs?

Assessment centre

Any organisation, whether it is a place of employment, college or private training organisation can be approved to offer this qualification, as long as it meets the criteria set out in the OCR publication 'NVQ Centre Guidance' (reference code L526). This includes being able to provide suitably occupationally competent assessors and internal verifiers. Once approved, an assessment centre will register candidates for the NVQ and allocate each candidate an assessor or assessors.

Trainer

The trainer will develop a candidate's knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the NVQ that is being undertaken. Trainers will:

- provide opportunities for learning
- provide ongoing mentoring to the candidate, including review and feedback on learning experiences and development of competence
- provide opportunities for a candidate to practice what they have learnt in a realistic, but safe and protected, working environment or, where this is not appropriate, in a simulated environment.

Assessors

Assessors are appointed by approved centres to assess candidate performance and evidence.

Assessors are required to be competent in performing the occupational requirements of the retail generic standards, in terms of performance and knowledge, for which they are assessing. The acquisition of this competence will have been gained either from direct employment in the same occupational role as the National Occupational Standards or in an operational supervisory, managerial or in-company trainer position of employees carrying out this role.

All assessors must:

- have worked in a retail company either as a retail assistant, as a supervisor/team leader/manager or as an in-company trainer of retail assistants
- have a minimum of 1 year's practical experience in the unit for which they are providing evidence, or six months if employed in a managerial position.

The Management Standards Unit also requires assessors to possess a good understanding of current management practice in order to assess the management units.

New assessors should have a clear action plan for achieving A1 within 18 months of beginning assessment. Assessment decisions by assessors who are still working

towards certification of A1 must be supported by someone who has gained these units. Support for trainee assessors' decisions should be recorded by the qualified assessor. This can be achieved by counter-signing assessment decisions (in Candidate Assessment Records or in the centre's internal assessment and verification records).

Assessors not currently employed within a Retail industry sector company, will need to prove they have an up-to-date working knowledge of the sector they are assessing. This can be demonstrated by maintaining records of evidence from occupational updating activities such as:

- internal or external work experience
- internal or external work shadowing opportunities
- other relevant CPD activities.

Internal verifiers

Internal verifiers must:

- be familiar with the occupational requirements of the standards that they are internally verifying
- have gained this familiarity while working directly within the occupational area in either an operational or a support function.

The level of familiarity should be sufficient to allow them to make a judgement as to whether the assessor has fully assessed candidates against all the performance and knowledge evidence requirements for the National Occupational Standards.

New internal verifiers should have a clear action plan for achieving Unit V1 within 18 months of beginning internal verification.

Verification carried out by internal verifiers who are still working towards certification of V1 must be supported by someone who has gained V1. Support for trainee IV decisions should be recorded by the qualified IV. This can be achieved by counter-signing verification decisions (in CARs or in the centre's internal verification records).

Internal Verifiers not currently employed within a Retail industry sector company, will need to prove they have an up-to-date working knowledge of the sector they are verifying. This can be demonstrated by maintaining records of evidence from occupational updating activities such as:

- internal or external work experience
- internal or external work shadowing opportunities
- other relevant CPD activities.
- relevant conferences and meetings attended.

How are these NVQs assessed?

These NVQs are competence-based. This means that they are linked to a person's ability to competently perform a range of tasks connected with their work.

To gain this NVQ a candidate must demonstrate the level of competence described in the NVQ units. The units of competence contain the National Occupational Standards for retail.

Unit information is provided as follows:

- the performance criteria against which assessors will assess candidates' competence
- the unit knowledge and understanding which describes what the candidate must know and understand
- a brief overview describing what the unit is about
- evidence requirements giving details about the type of evidence the candidate must provide
- assessment guidance to gather the evidence. This is important for assessors as it identifies typical performance. These examples have been selected after an examination of each work role. Candidates should agree with their assessor that the evidence identified is suitable for their work situation and job role.

To achieve each of these NVQs each candidate must:

- prove that they can consistently and competently meet the performance criteria listed
- provide evidence as specified in the evidence requirements
- prove that they have the necessary knowledge and understanding to support their demonstration of competence.

Qualification structure

To achieve a full OCR NVQ in retail, candidates must achieve the units shown in the following table:

Unit No	Unit Title	Level 1 Retail Skills Note A	Level 2 Retail Skills Note B	Level 3 Retail Sales Professional Note C	Level 4 Retail Visual Merchandising Note D	Level 3 Retail Management Note E
M = Mandatory, O = Optional						
B1	Move goods and materials manually in a retail environment	O				
B2	Keep stock at required levels in a retail environment	O				
B3	Receive materials and goods into storage in a retail environment		O			
B4	Put goods and materials into storage in a retail environment		O			
B5	Keep stock on sale at required levels in a retail environment		O			
B6	Process customer orders for goods in retail environment		O			
B7	Process returned goods and materials in a retail environment		O			
B8	Process donated goods for resale or recycling in a retail environment	O				
B9	Prepare products for sale to customers in a retail environment		O			
B10	Process bake-off products for sale in a retail environment		O			
B11	Process fish and shellfish for sale in a retail environment		O			
B12	Process greengrocery products for sale in a retail environment		O			
B13	Finish meat products by hand in a retail environment		O			
B14	Organise the receipt and storage of goods in a retail environment			O	O	O
B15	Audit stock levels and stock inventories in a retail environment			O		O
B16	Source required goods and services in a retail environment			O		O
B17	Contribute to dough production control and efficiency		O			
B18	Select, weigh and measure dough ingredients		O			
B19	Hand divide, mould and shape fermented doughs		O			
B20	Contribute to food safety in a retail environment	O				
B21	Maintain food safety while working with food in a retail environment		O			
B22	Monitor and help improve food safety in a retail environment			O		O
B23	Receive driver-controlled deliveries of fuel on a petrol forecourt		O			
B24	Control deliveries of motor fuel on a forecourt		O			
C1	Wrap and pack goods for customers in a retail environment	O				
C2	Display stock to promote sales to customers in a retail environment		O			
C3	Help customers choose products in a retail environment		O			
C4	Maximise product sales in a retail environment		O			
C5	Provide information and advice to customers in a retail environment		O			
C6	Demonstrate products to customers in a retail environment		O			
C7	Process part exchange sales transactions in a retail environment			O		
C8	Process payments for purchases in a retail environment		O			
C9	Process payments and credit applications for purchases in a retail environment		O			
C10	Process cash and credit transactions in a retail environment		O			
C11	Assemble retail products in customer's home/workplace		O			
C12	Promote loyalty schemes to customers in a retail environment		O			
C13	Maintain the availability of goods for sale to customers in a retail environment			O		O
C14	Provide specialist support in helping customers to make purchases in a retail environment			O		
C15	Enable customers to apply for credit and hire purchase facilities			O		
C16	Evaluate the receipt of payments from customers					O
C17	Provide the lingerie fitting service in a retail environment		O			
C18	Follow guidelines for planning and preparing visual merchandising displays		O			
C19	Follow guidelines for dressing visual merchandising displays		O			
C20	Order graphic materials for visual merchandising displays		O			
C21	Dismantle and store visual merchandising displays		O			
C22	Make props for visual merchandising displays		O			
C23	Put visual merchandising displays together		O			
C24	Choose merchandise to feature in visual merchandising displays				O	
C25	Plan, monitor and control how graphics are used in visual merchandising displays				O	
C26	Monitor the effect of visual merchandising displays and layouts				O	
C27	Allocate, monitor and control visual merchandising project resources against budgets				O	
C28	Contribute to developing and putting into practice the company's visual merchandising policy				O	

C29	Create plans, elevations and drawings to realise visual merchandising ideas				O	
C30	Develop individual retail service opportunities			O		
C31	Provide a personalised sales and after-sales service to your retail clients			O		
C35	Promote beauty products to retail customers		O			
C36	Follow point-of-sale procedures for age-restricted products in a retail environment		O			
C37	Help customers to buy National Lottery products in a retail environment		O			
C38	Assist customers to obtain appropriate insurance			O		
C39	Process the self-service dispensing and purchase of motor fuel on a forecourt		O			
C40	Establish customer needs and provide advice regarding tiling products		O	O		
C41	Advise customers upon measuring and planning for the fixing of tiles		O	O		
C42	Advise customers upon the fixing of tiles		O	O		
C43	Maintain a display of cut flowers in a retail store		O			
C44	Provide a counter/take-away service (People 1st)	O	O			
D1	Give customers a positive impression of yourself and your organisation		O			
D2	Support customer service improvements		O			
D3	Resolve customer service problems		O			
D5	Organise the delivery of reliable customer service			O		O
D6	Improve the customer relationship			O		O
D7	Work with others to improve customer service			O		O
D8	Monitor and solve customer service problems			O		O
D9	Promote continuous improvement in customer service			O		O
E1	Help to keep the retail unit secure	O				
E2	Help to maintain health and safety in a retail environment	O				
E3	Work effectively in your retail team	M				
E4	Keep the retail environment clean and hygienic (non-food)	O				
E6	Help to maintain health and safety in a retail environment		O			
E7	Help to keep the retail unit secure		O			
E8	Work effectively in your retail organisation			M	M	M
E9	Help to manage a retail team			O	O	
E10	Contribute to the continuous improvement of retail operations				O	O
E11	Help to monitor and maintain the security of the retail unit			O		O
E12	Plan, monitor and adjust staffing levels and schedules in a retail environment			O		O
E13	Recruit, select and keep colleagues					O
E14	Provide learning opportunities for colleagues					O
E15	Develop productive working relationships with colleagues					O
E16	Allocate and check work in your team					O
E17	Monitor and evaluate the quality of service provided by external suppliers to your customers			O		O
E18	Monitor and maintain health and safety in a retail environment					O
E19	Work effectively in your retail team		M			

Notes:

- A. Mandatory Unit plus 4 optional units, one of which may come from level 2 with the exception of E19
- B. Mandatory Unit plus 5 optional units, one of which may come from:
 - level 3 (with the exception of E8)
 - the following units at level 1 (B8, B20)

Only one unit may count towards the qualification when taken from D1, D2, D3, D5, D6, D7, D8 & D9
- C. 'Mandatory Unit plus 5 optional units, one of which may come from the following units at level 2 (B10, B11, B12, B13, B17, B18, B19, C17, C35)

Only one unit may count towards the qualification when taken from D5, D6, D7, D8 & D9

- D. 'mandatory Unit plus 5 optional units, one of which may come from the following units at level 2 (C18, C19, C20, C21, C22, C23)
- E. 'mandatory Unit plus 5 optional units, two of which must come from the following units (E10, E13, E14, E15, E16).

Only one unit may count towards the qualification when taken from D5, D6, D7, D8 & D9

A unit is the smallest part of these NVQs for which a candidate can be awarded a certificate.

If a candidate has achieved **any** of the units in these NVQs through another awarding body, OCR will accept the unit certificates issued by that body. Candidates should supply their **original** unit certificates with their portfolio of evidence to claim a full NVQ. Only units with the same QCA reference number can be accepted towards these NVQs.

What to do next?

Centres considering seeking approval to offer this qualification (or any other qualification we offer) might be interested to know that OCR staff are available to help with any aspect of setting up an assessment centre. Through an advisory telephone call or visit centres can benefit from experience gained in existing centres. Many centres ask for help in the following areas:

- identifying potential candidates and marketing opportunities
- meeting OCR requirements
- identifying resourcing levels both in terms of staff and equipment
- the documents needed, both for the benefit of future candidates and to ensure a smooth-running operation
- help in filling in centre approval forms.

To seek approval to offer this qualification, you must complete and submit an application form along with relevant attachments. Centres who are new to OCR must complete an 'Application for Approval as an OCR Centre for N/VQs (VQ1)'. Centres who already offer NVQs with OCR must complete an 'Application for approval to run additional N/VQs (VQ1a)'.

Further information may be requested from the OCR Customer Contact Centre, OCR, Coventry Office, Westwood Way, Coventry, CV4 8JQ Telephone (024) 76 851509 or email vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

- Centre Support CD-ROM (C079) containing the full qualifications and guidance on their implementation is available to purchase, from OCR Publications (0870 770 6622). Information is also available to view and download from OCR's website: www.ocr.org.uk
- The OCR fees booklet (A250), which includes charges for centre evaluation, candidate registration and certification, is available from the OCR Customer Contact Centre. This publication may be downloaded from the OCR website.
- The leaflet 'Becoming an NVQ Centre: Steps to Implementation (N61)' will be useful to organisations considering applying to OCR to become a centre.

- Full details of how to apply are given in 'OCR Administrative Guide to Vocational Qualifications (L526)' which is included in the Centre Approval Pack, which is available from the Customer Contact Centre. This publication may be downloaded from the OCR website.

What other related OCR qualifications are available?

OCR offers a wide range of qualifications that are related to the requirements of retail.

These qualifications complement and support the activities undertaken with the NVQs in retail.

OCR NVQs in Retail at Levels 1, 2 and 3

OCR NVQs in Customer Service at Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4

OCR VRQs in Customer Service at Levels 2 and 3

OCR NVQs in Administration Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4

OCR NVQ in Plant Operations Level 2 (Lift Truck Operation)

OCR NVQs in Distribution, Warehousing and Storage Operations Levels 2 and 3

OCR NVQs in Management Levels 3, 4 and 5

OCR NVQ in Team Leading Level 2

Please contact the Customer Contact Centre if you would like further information on any of the above qualifications.

Who developed the standards for this qualification?

Skillsmart Retail is the Sector Skills Council responsible for the skills and productivity needs of the retail sector. This includes development of National Occupational Standards on which these qualifications are based.

Skillsmart Retail Ltd
40 Duke Street
London
W1A 1AB

Tel 020 7399 3450
Fax 020 7399 3451
contactus@skillsmartretail.com
www.skillsmartretail.com

www.ocr.org.uk

OCR customer contact centre

Vocational qualifications

Telephone 024 76 851509

Facsimile 024 76 421944

Email vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

OCR

1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU

Telephone 01223 552552

Facsimile 01223 553377



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