



Ascentis Entry Level Award in
Developing Online Digital Skills (Entry 3)
Specification

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ABOUT ASCENTIS

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

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

Ascentis is distinctive and unusual in that it is both:

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

and

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

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

ASCENTIS CONTACT DETAILS

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ASCENTIS ENTRY LEVEL AWARD IN DEVELOPING ONLINE DIGITAL SKILLS (ENTRY 3)

Introduction

The Ascentis Entry Level Award in Developing Online Digital Skills (Entry 3) qualification aims to provide learners with an essential awareness, understanding and practical ability relating to digital skills that are increasingly needed as part of an individual's skill set for life, work and society. Learners will develop the necessary skills to use computing devices to access the internet and use tools and techniques to search for information, send emails, download documents and complete online forms. Learners will work with files and folders to store, organise and retrieve information and recognise when technical problems occur and how to respond and rectify them. Learners will also understand the safety and security implications of online activity and how to protect their digital footprint so they are always safe legally and confidently whilst online.

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

- Unit certification is available for each of the units
- Verification and certification can be offered throughout the year, allowing maximum flexibility for centres
- They can be delivered either as a classroom-based course or as a blended learning programme
- Evidence can be generated within a wide range of organisational contexts, allowing the qualification to meet the specific occupational requirements of the learners

Aims

The aims of the qualification are to enable learners:

- 1 To develop basic digital skills necessary for life, work and society
- 2 To understand how computing devices connect to the internet
- 3 To be able to use tools and techniques to search, store and retrieve information
- 4 To be able to use email tools and techniques to communicate and exchange messages
- 5 To adhere to safe and secure online practices and protect digital footprint

Target Group

The qualification is aimed at a range of learners, including:

- Young people wishing to pick up an award as part of another learning programme
- Young people aged 14–19 who are in various learning environments
- Adult learners

Regulation Codes

Ofqual Regulation Number:

Ascentis Entry Level Award in Developing Online Digital Skills (Entry 3): 603/4617/6

Rules of Combination

Learners must complete one unit for the Award in Developing Online Digital Skills at Entry 3.

Ascentis Entry Level Award in Developing Online Digital Skills (Entry 3)				
Title	Level	Credit Value	GLH	Unit ref
Developing Online Digital Skills	Entry 3	3	30	M/617/6233

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

The recommended guided learning hours for this qualification is 30.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

The total qualification time is 30.

Time Limit for the Process of Credit Accumulation and Exemptions

Credit accumulation is usually within the life span of the qualification.

Recommended Prior Knowledge, Attainment and/or Experience

No recommended prior learning or experience is required.

Age Range of Qualification

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

Opportunities for Progression

Learners may progress from this Award to the IT User Skills Award, Certificate or Diploma.

Centre Recognition

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

Qualification Approval

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

Registration

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

Status in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

These qualifications are available in England. They are only offered in English. If you wish to deliver them in any other nation, please contact development@ascentis.co.uk.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

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

Enquiries and Appeals Procedure

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

Useful Links

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

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

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

ASSESSMENT AND VERIFICATION ARRANGEMENTS

Assessment

All units are internally assessed through the learner building up a portfolio of evidence that covers the relevant assessment criteria. They are internally assessed and verified by the centre and then externally verified by Ascentis.

On completion of the learners' evidence for the Award, the assessor is required to complete the Summary Record of Achievement for each learner. The Summary Record of Achievement asks assessors and the internal verifier to confirm that the rules of combination have been followed. This is particularly important in cases where a learner has taken units at different levels. The Summary Record of Achievement form is provided in Appendix 1.

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

Internal Assessment

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

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

- Observation record
- Questions and discussions
- Photographs
- Video
- Worksheets
- Audio recordings
- Self assessments
- Workbook activities

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

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

Verification

Internal Verification

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

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

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

External Verification

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

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

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

Knowledge, Understanding and Skills required of Assessors and Internal Verifiers

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

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

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

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

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

UNIT SPECIFICATIONS

Developing Online Digital Skills – M/617/6233

Credit Value of Unit: 3

GLH of Unit: 30

Level of Unit: Entry 3

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner should be able to	The learner can
1. Use ICT systems and devices to meet needs	1.1 Start and shut down a computing device using correct procedures
	1.2 Use input and output devices
	1.3 Recognise and use interface features
	1.4 Use appropriate terminology when describing computing devices
2. Understand how computing devices connect to the internet	2.1 Identify different ways of connecting to the internet
	2.2 Identify how to connect a computing device to the internet
	2.3 Identify health and safety issues associated with the use of the internet
	2.4 Outline the advantages and disadvantages of using the internet for online activities
3. Use browser tools to navigate websites	3.1 Identify common features of browsers
	3.2 Use a browser to navigate websites
	3.3 Identify why browser settings need to be adjusted to aid navigation
4. Use browser tools to search for information	4.1 Use search criteria to locate information
	4.2 Search online sources of information to meet needs
	4.3 Select relevant information from online sources to meet needs
	4.4 Demonstrate how to create bookmarks
5. Retrieve and submit information online	5.1 Download files to meet needs
	5.2 Use tools to complete online forms to meet needs
6. Understand the need to work online safely and securely	6.1 Recognise safe and secure websites
	6.2 Stay safe and work responsibly
	6.3 Keep information safe and secure
	6.4 Demonstrate how to access a device securely
	6.5 Demonstrate how to minimise the risk of computer viruses
7. Understand the need to manage online activities safely and securely	7.1 Understand your digital footprint
	7.2 Identify the types of online activities that leave a digital footprint

8. Store, organise and retrieve information	8.1 Open, read and save information to/from files using appropriate naming conventions
	8.2 Manage files and folders to store, organise and retrieve information
	8.3 Use local and remote storage to store, organise and retrieve information
9. Use digital communications	9.1 Open and read messages using appropriate tools
	9.2 Compose and send messages using appropriate language and tools
	9.3 Attach files to messages
	9.4 Demonstrate how to create and use contacts lists
	9.5 Initiate and participate in video calls
10. Maintain the performance of computing devices	10.1 Identify common device problems
	10.2 Respond to common device problems

Indicative Content

Please be aware that the indicative content supplied below is a suggested guide only.

Use ICT systems and devices to meet needs

Start and shut down procedures: desktop, portable/hand-held, tablets, smart phones, smart watches, switch on/off, start and shut down, login, enter password, passcode, install and/or charge battery, install SIM, update software, lock/unlock, touch screen, keyboard/pad, stylus, voice command.

Input/output devices: will vary according to the set up or device, for example: input devices (e.g. keyboard, mouse, touch screen or other pointing device, stylus), output devices (e.g. screen, printer, scanner, TV).

Interface features: display, desktop, home screen, window, dialogue box, menu, submenu, toolbar, keypad, button, icon, scrollbar, drag and drop, pinch, zoom, minimise, maximise, rotate.

Appropriate terminology: will vary according to the set up or device, computer, PC, laptop, notebook, netbook, tablet, smart phone, input device, keyboard, mouse, pointer, processor, output device, screen, touch screen, printer, storage media, cloud storage, app, memory, disk, CD, DVD, data/memory stick, hard drive, network, desktop, window, dialogue box, menu, submenu, toolbar, icon, scrollbar, button, drag and drop, pinch, zoom, minimise, maximise, USB, connectivity, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, 3G, 4G.

Understand how computing devices connect to the internet

Connecting to the internet: LAN, VPN, mobile phone, modem, router, wireless, dial-up, broadband, Internet Service Provider (ISP), Wi-Fi (secure vs. public), 3G, 4G, login details, username, password, hardware and software requirements.

Health and safety issues: accessibility, screen size/resolution, screen time, impact on health and well-being, physical stresses and psychological health risks, parental controls, Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations, security.

Advantages and disadvantages: speed, portability, access, availability of software and apps, compatibility, synchronisation, backup, screen time/health issues, connectivity, bandwidth, risks, personal safety, and information security.

Use browser tools to navigate websites

Browser features: web browsers, e.g. Internet Explorer, Edge, Firefox, Chrome, Safari, Dolphin, Opera; features, e.g. enter, back, forward, refresh, stop, history, new window, new tab, toolbar, search bar, address bar: home, go to, follow link, URL.

Navigate websites: home page, hyperlinks, hotspots, interactive, address bar, URL, domain name (e.g. .com, .co.uk), menu, content, menu, toolbar, icon, scrollbar, button.

Adjust browser settings: home page, autofill, security, pop-ups, appearance, privacy, search engine, toolbars, zoom, 'Trusted Sites'.

Use browser tools to search for information

Search criteria: keywords, quotation marks, search within results, 'find' or 'search' tools, turn questions into key words for an online query.

Sources of information: selective use of browser results, scanning pages, copying and pasting, consider copyright and plagiarism.

Relevant information: recognise intention and authority of provider, currency, relevance, accuracy, bias, level of detail, fitness for purpose, printing selective information, consider copyright and plagiarism.

Bookmarks: bookmarks bar, history, favourites, hyperlinks, shortcuts, favourite websites, create bookmark, copy/use URL.

Retrieve and submit information online

Download documents: save location, file size, appropriate filenames, editable documents (e.g. Word), non-editable documents (e.g. PDF), common file formats (e.g. doc, pdf, gif, jpg).

Online forms: typically comprise a simple single page form, such as those used to enter name and/or contact details, or to request a service (e.g. collection of household waste) or make an appointment; completion online, e.g. timed responses, saving drafts, checking, final submission, cannot be changed after entering data, number of characters, word limits; data validation and verification checks, e.g. accuracy, reliability, personal information, upper/lower case, mandatory fields, CAPTCHA; auto-complete (e.g. postcode/address); data type check (e.g. DOB (00/00/00)), range check, e.g. mobile phone number should have 11 digits and no letters, special characters or spaces; consistency check, e.g. collection date cannot be before the order date.

Understand the need to work online safely and securely

Safe and secure websites: SSL encryption, https (s for secure), padlock symbol, valid certificate, secure certificates, beware of malware-infected websites, public hotspots.

Stay safe and work responsibly: appropriate language and behaviour, 'netiquette', respect for others, false identities/information, financial deception, fraud, identity theft, disclosure of information, firewall settings, internet security settings, reporting inappropriate behaviour, reporting security threats/breaches, content filtering, avoid misuse of content, physical stresses and psychological health risks.

Keep information secure: protect personal information from fraud and scams (identity theft), 'safe' username and password/PIN selection, passcode, online identity/profile – real name/pseudonym, personal information – who can view, withholding personal information, password protect files, keep passwords safe, don't reveal personal details to unknown sources, secure websites (https) to exchange private information (encryption, reduced risk of intercepted data), security software (e.g. anti-spam, firewall).

Passwords: use of secure ways of accessing a device: passwords, use of upper/lower case, numbers and symbols, retrieve forgotten passwords, password reset, security questions, never reveal/write down password/logon details, delete emails containing passwords, use different passwords for different devices and accounts, authentication processes (two-factor/multi-factor), security keys; fingerprint, facial or voice recognition.

Computer viruses: anti-virus software, anti-spam software, firewall, caution with emails/attachments/hyperlinks/special offers from unknown sources.

Understand the need to manage online activities safely and securely

Digital footprint: online reputation, traceable online activity, permanent record, personal data, sharing/posting information, damage to online reputation from inappropriate/offensive posts/content, impact on college/university/job applications, increase in the number of employers and universities who search for an individual's digital footprint when making recruitment decisions, build online reputation through using positive online behaviours, e.g. blogs, CV, e-portfolio of work, voluntary work, fundraising, team working.

Online activities: any activity carried out online, e.g. visiting a website, buying/selling goods/services online, having a conversation in an online chat room, using a search engine, posting/sharing information on social media.

Open, read and save files: open, save, save as, browse, appropriate file naming conventions (know the content of a document without opening it, e.g. consistent, descriptive, short but meaningful, avoid special characters and spaces).

Store, organise and retrieve information

File and folder management: display file lists, sort, search; files – create, name, open, save, save as, delete; folders and subfolders – create, name, open, move, copy, rename, delete.

Local and remote storage: disk, CD, DVD, data/memory (USB) stick, media card, internal/external hard drives, network drives, cloud storage (e.g. iCloud, Google Drive, OneDrive).

Use digital communications

Email messages: distribution list, individual/multiple recipients, read/unread messages, open/close messages, use of to, from, cc, bcc, subject, reply, reply all, forward, attachments

Appropriate language: avoid use of slang or 'text-speak' in formal documents, use appropriate format of text (font, size, colour), format paragraphs (alignment, bullets, numbered list), spelling/grammar check, proofreading, peer proofreading (someone else to check before sending important documents), appropriate use of greetings and salutations, e.g. Dear Sir, Yours faithfully, Dear Jane, Yours sincerely, Hi, Hello, Best wishes, See you soon.

Attachments: text file (.txt), Word (.doc) Adobe Reader (.pdf); image and photograph files (e.g. .jpg, .png), awareness of file size, image resolution; clear reference to the attachment included in the message.

Contacts: address book, create, edit, view delete contacts, contact group/distribution list, import/export contacts to devices.

Maintain the performance of computing devices

Common device problems: program not responding, hang-up/crash, reboot/restart, error dialogue, storage full, software update, connectivity, bandwidth, battery life, application and file use, device maintenance, signal loss/network availability (e.g. interference, distance, location).

Respond to common device problems: limits of own understanding and skills, help menus, manufacturer's guidelines, how to follow advice, information from experts, user support helpline/websites.

APPENDIX 1

Summary Record of Achievement

Entry Level Award in Developing Online Digital Skills (Entry 3)

Unit Title	Level	Credit Value	Date completed	Assessor Signature	Internal Verifier Signature (if sampled)
Developing Online Digital Skills	Entry 3	3			

Learner Name _____

Assessor Signature _____

Internal Verifier Signature (if sampled) _____

APPENDIX 2

Tracking Sheet

Entry 3 Developing Online Digital Skills

Criteria	Assessment Method	Evidence Details	Portfolio Reference	Completion Date
1.1 Start and shut down a computing device using correct procedures				
1.2 Use input and output devices				
1.3 Recognise and use interface features				
1.4 Use appropriate terminology when describing computing devices				
2.1 Identify different ways of connecting to the internet				
2.2 Identify how to connect a computing device to the internet				
2.3 Identify health and safety issues associated with the use of the internet				
2.4 Outline the advantages and disadvantages of using the internet for online activities				
3.1 Identify common features of browsers				
3.2 Use a browser to navigate websites				
3.3 Identify why browser settings need to be adjusted to aid navigation				
4.1 Use search criteria to locate information				
4.2 Search online sources of information to meet needs				
4.3 Select relevant information from online sources to meet needs				
4.4 Demonstrate how to create bookmarks				
5.1 Download files to meet needs				
5.2 Use tools to complete online forms to meet needs				
6.1 Recognise safe and secure websites				
6.2 Stay safe and work responsibly				

6.3	Keep information safe and secure				
6.4	Demonstrate how to access a device securely				
6.5	Demonstrate how to minimise the risk of computer viruses				
7.1	Understand your digital footprint				
7.2	Identify the types of online activities that leave a digital footprint				
8.1	Open, read and save information to/from files using appropriate naming conventions				
8.2	Manage files and folders to store, organise and retrieve				
8.3	Use local and remote storage to store, organise and retrieve information				
9.1	Open and read messages using appropriate tools				
9.2	Compose and send messages using appropriate language and tools				
9.3	Attach files to messages				
9.4	Demonstrate how to create and use contacts lists				
9.5	Initiate and participate in video calls				
10.1	Identify common device problems				
10.2	Respond to common device problems				

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

Learner Signature _____ Date _____

Assessor Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Verifier (if sampled) _____ Date _____