

Consultation on the reform of the WJEC Vocational Award in Retail Business (Technical Award)

Our current Vocational Award in Retail Business was launched for first teaching in 2014 with the first award in 2015. It has been approved as a Technical Award for inclusion in Key Stage 4 performance tables since 2015 and will remain on the performance tables until 2023.

We are currently reforming this qualification to meet Ofqual and DfE requirements for qualifications to be included in performance tables from 2024 onwards. At the same time, we are taking the opportunity to revise and update the qualification to reflect changes in the sector and feedback from centres.

We are seeking views from centres on our high-level proposals. Feedback at this stage will help inform the final shape and content of the qualification. You can access the consultation questions in a Microsoft Form that is available via a link at the end of this document.

The specification for our current Vocational Award in Retail Business can be downloaded from the [Eduqas website](#).

The UK Retail Business sector

It is impossible to understate the importance of the retail industry to UK economy; 2019 generated £394 billion¹ in retail sales, 5% of the UK's Gross Domestic Product. There is a diverse and expansive range of jobs within the retail industry. As the largest private sector employer with a current employment rate of almost £3 million², young people can aspire to many employment opportunities from the shop floor to the showroom, and from head office functions to the warehouse. This is a sector whose landscape is quickly changing as a result of innovations such as social media and smartphones, online shopping, and consumers who are increasing environmentally and ethically conscious.

The reformed Vocational Award in Retail Business

The WJEC Vocational Award in Retail Business is designed to provide learners aged 14-16 with a broad introduction to key elements of retail business rather than targeting a specific sub-sector of the industry. Learners will develop a range of general and specialist knowledge, understanding and skills that will support their progression to further study.

The qualification is being designed to build on skills, knowledge and understanding acquired at Key Stage 3, particularly skills related to literacy, numeracy, use of technology and design. It will complement a range of other subjects including GCSEs in English and mathematics.

¹ <https://www.retailconomics.co.uk/library-retail-stats-and-facts>

² <https://www.retailconomics.co.uk/library-retail-stats-and-facts>

Proposals relating to the qualification structure and topic areas included

Our current Vocational Award in Retail Business is made up of three mandatory units:

Unit	Unit title	Assessment	GLH
1	Customer Experience	Internal controlled task	30
2	Retail Business	External examination	30
3	Retail Operations	Internal controlled task	60

We propose that the reformed qualification retains a three-unit structure with the externally assessed unit contributing 40% to the overall grade of the qualification and the two internally assessed units contributing the remaining 60%.

Unit	Unit title	Assessment	GLH
1	The business of retail	External examination	48
2	Customer service for retail businesses	Internal controlled task	36
2	Merchandising and marketing retail products	Internal controlled task	36

Unit 1 - The business of retail

This unit introduces learners to the business of retail using focuses similar to those of the legacy specification, including:

- Introduction to retail business
- The retail business environment
- Using data and recommending solutions to retail business issues

Unit 2 - Customer service for retail businesses

Unit 2 allows learners to explore the demands of customer service and to apply their knowledge and understanding to a set case study. In this unit, learners will focus on:

- Introduction to customer service
- Meeting customer expectation
- Investigating customer experiences in retail businesses

Unit 3 - Merchandising and marketing retail products

Unit 3 provides learners with the opportunity to explore the merchandising and marketing of retail products. Learners will apply what they have learned to a marketing project responding to a set brief, and will have the opportunity to draw upon their learning from across all units. In this unit, learner will study:

- Visual merchandising for retail business
- Marketing retail businesses and products

Proposals relating to our approach to assessment

As indicated in the qualification structure above, the proposed approach to assessment will be informed by the qualification structure.

It is proposed that Unit 1 is assessed through an external examination. We believe that the content of Unit 1 lends itself to an external examination and this assessment method will help prepare learners for further study in business-related subjects where external examinations are a common component. We currently offer on-screen assessment for a number of our Vocational Awards and feedback from both centres and learners has indicated that this is engaging and motivating for learners. On-screen assessment also allows us to introduce new and innovative question types including the use of audio and/or video clips where appropriate. We therefore propose that the external examination in the new Vocational Award in Retail Business is available as an on-screen assessment.

The first assessment of this qualification will be in 2024 and we anticipate that there will be greater use of technology in learning and assessment by this time. We will keep this proposal under review throughout the development process and will consult with centres and stakeholders to ensure that schools have the technical infrastructure in place before we make a final decision.

Units 2 and 3 would be assessed through internally assessed assignments completed under controlled conditions. Both assignments will include a series of practical tasks to assess learners' underpinning knowledge and understanding as well as their practical skills. Due to the vocational nature of the subject, it is our intention that the majority of the marks for Unit 3 will be awarded for practical skills in marketing and merchandise.

Additional areas for consideration

In addition to your views on the proposals for this qualification, we are also interested in hearing your views on a number of other areas including resources. Within the online form, there is an opportunity to join a closed forum to discuss these areas further.

Consultation questions

To provide your views on these proposals please complete the online form [here](#).