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Examiner's Report

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General Comments

This report provides detailed feedback for all the units examined, or moderated, in the January 2006 series. Moderation was available for all the AS units and an examination was set for Unit 3 (6953 – The Knowledge Worker). There were entries for all of the 6 AS units and in all units there were examples of exceptional work.

Centres are advised to continually review the microsite (http://ict.edexcel.org.uk/home/) where additional support materials are being added all the time.

Examined Unit

As there was only one examined unit assessed in this series, all general comments are included in the report.

Moderated Units

Assessment Issues

Candidates need to supply explicit evidence to support their achievement of the criteria in the various marking grids. It is easier to confirm marks if the evidence is easy to find and supplied in an explicit form. Centre assessors can also help by explaining where they have awarded marks for implicit evidence in the e-sheets. In general, the links in the e-books for unit 1 were tested well. This was not particularly the case for the e-portfolios in general. There were instances where the links were to files in the candidate's user area, and these files were not included on the CD. In this situation the moderator has no choice but to not agree with the marks. The e-portfolios should be tested in the environment that they will be seen by the moderator.

The interpretation of the marking grids, described in the January Chief Examiners report was applied by many centres. The relevant section of the January report is repeated below and will apply to future moderation.

In many of the moderated units the assessment grids and guidance required the candidates to include in their portfolios a set number of items. For example, Unit 1 requires a description of 5 Internet Services. The inference of the mark scheme is that if the candidate produced less than this number then they would fail to enter that mark band. If this mark band is Mark Band 1 then the candidate will get no marks. The senior assessment team felt that this was unfair and that there may be genuine reasons why the candidate was unable to include this number. The team felt that in these circumstances the candidate should be given credit for the work they have done and be awarded a proportion of the marks. A number of centres submitted marks where these minimum requirements had not been reached and had, on the face of it correctly, awarded zero marks for that particular mark band. In these circumstances centres may find their marks adjusted upwards. Centres should be aware that in future series credit can be given in these circumstances as long as the reason why the candidate failed to submit the required number is explained in the e-sheet supplied with the e-portfolio.

Administration Issues

Most centres provided disks that worked and the e-portfolios were clearly labelled as were the e-sheets. Only a minority of centres had not used e-sheets and had not given a breakdown of marks. Centres need to check that the disks contain e-portfolios that can be read and accessed on another system. Discs should be burned to ISO 9660 standard, enabling them to be read on any system.

The e-sheets provided by centres with their candidates work varied in quality. Once again, very few centres provided enough information about the candidates work to enable the moderator to understand why the marks had been awarded. In some cases centres provided no comments at all. The approach to marking this unit is holistic and the centre assessor's views are important to the moderator. The moderator will only take these views into account if they are stated on the e-sheet.

An exemplar e-sheet has been included on the Applied ICT Microsite (http://ict.edexcel.org.uk/home/).

Unit 1 Principal Moderator's Report

General Comments

It was pleasing to see that centres had used the experiences and comments from the January series to help their candidates produce good quality work. The majority of the work seen was appropriate and gave the candidates good opportunities to meet the requirements of the specification

The accuracy of the marking by centres was varied. There were several examples of work submitted in inappropriate file formats, such as PowerPoint presentations which had not been converted to html format, or long, document-style PDF files with few links for e-book presentations. Some assessors did make appropriate comments, however, in many cases, the comments on the e-record sheets were too brief to be helpful, or gave no indication of how the assessor had applied the assessment guidance.

Many candidates produced well designed and clearly thought out e-books. It appears that some candidates spent a considerable amount of time putting their e-book together. Other pieces of work were simply a collection of web pages with many links that did not work and images that did not appear.

Strand (a) - On-Line Services

There was generally a broad coverage of online services by most candidates. Many candidates did not have clear evidence of 5 online services. At times they included two types of the same online service presented, but presented these as different services which limited the marks they could be awarded.

Many candidates did not go into the required depth of coverage of each of the services. For example, the only type of communication covered was email. To gain marks above MB1 candidates need to describe and evaluate more than one aspect of each service. Some candidates simply evaluated websites for this strand, rather than the services themselves.

Note that it is possible to access marks if fewer than five types of service are covered.

Strand (b) - Life in the Information Age

Very few candidates had used a variety of sources. To gain marks above MB1 candidates must use sources of information other than the internet. One of the main sources of evidence for this is the candidate's bibliography. Frequently, this consisted of a list of URLs and nothing more. In some cases, the information presented was merely copied from sources, with no evidence that candidates understood what they were writing about.

In some case five different aspects were not present. This prevented candidates accessing the full range of marks for this strand, although it is possible to access marks if fewer than five are covered.

The overall impact was not discussed by many candidates. Candidates should be encouraged to summarise and comment on the overall impact of ICT on life in the Information Age. This is essential to access the higher mark ranges.

Strand (c) - Digital Divide

Evidence was often weaker than in previous sections. Those candidates, who appreciated the need to research the extent of the divide and the measures being taken to bridge the gap, achieved the higher mark band. Many candidates focussed on specific projects for bridging the divide without considering their impact. Candidates often listed or gave a brief comment on factors such as wealth and environment but did not evaluate the impact or the extent. Government measures to bridge the gap were rarely mentioned.

To gain marks in the higher mark bands the candidates must cover the divide at all levels, eg local, national and international.

Strand (d) - The E-Book

Many candidates did not produce a title page for the people of 100 years in the future or produced an inappropriate one.

There was evidence of many candidates creating professional looking e-books using the appropriate software and multimedia design. However there were a lot of poorly chosen colour schemes and animations, which detracted from the overall effect.

Very few candidates addressed the awareness of audience and purpose. Some wrote the e-book without the audience in mind. Many e-books used external links with no thought that they may not be available in 100 years time. Some candidates used extracts from websites that were contained within the candidate's e-book so no external access was required.

Some centres submitted work consisting of a collection of unlinked files produced in Word, or PDF format. Others submitted a collection of web pages with many links not working and images not appearing. Often, this was due to the fact that absolute references were used in the building of the e-book, and when removed from the centres computer system, or placed in a different file structure, the links could not be resolved

Standard ways of working were not always observed by candidates in that filenames were not meaningful and external assessors had difficulty in finding the start of the e-book.

Strand (e) - Components and Structure

Candidates clearly enjoyed the construction aspects of this unit and many good examples of well constructed e-books were seen.

The fact that many links did not work was often overlooked by the assessors when awarding marks for strand (e) as thorough testing clearly had not taken place.

Candidates need the opportunity to copy the e-book to CD and test the links before it is sent for assessment. One way to improve this aspect of assessment would be for centre assessors to mark a copy of the work either on CD or by copying it out of the original user's area.

Evidence of testing was often demonstrated by the fact that a fully functional e-book had been produced; some candidates included test plans and feedback from others as further evidence.

Strand (f) - Evaluation

Most candidates managed to make evaluative comments about their e-book but were unable to evaluate their own performance and a few incorporated feedback from others. To access the top mark band candidates are recommended to suggest an improvement to their e-book.

Many candidates still confused the e-portfolio with the e-book at this stage. The evaluation is not part of the e-book and should be a separate document within the e-portfolio

Standard Ways of Working

In most cases the only evidence the external assessors had for this aspect was the bibliography and the file structures and names used by the candidates. In some cases it was difficult to locate the e-book or e-portfolios of candidates, as these were often not effectively named.

Bibliographies are the main source of evidence to support the range of sources of information used by the candidate; too many candidates still give "Google", "Yahoo" and other search engines as the source of the information when clearly the source was a website found using them. Many candidates only quoted web sites. The specification requires a wide range of different sources used for strands (b) and (c) and by only quoting websites the candidate is restricting themselves to the lower mark bands.

General Administration
The majority of samples were correctly submitted with folders clearly labelled with centre number, candidate number and the first letter of the candidates surname and first name or Christian name. It would help if the e-record sheet naming convention followed this practice.

The centre assessor should use the e-record as an opportunity to help the moderator identify the evidence required to confirm the marks given. The comments by centres often contained only 1 line; in other cases no comments at all were provided. Some centres placed all units on the same CD, however each unit needs to be burnt to a separate CD.

Unit 2 Principal Moderator's Report

General Comments

As very few centres submitted 6952 e-portfolios for moderation in January, this series saw the first major moderation for Unit 2. Evidence covering the full range of marks available was seen, ie 0-60 and it was pleasing to see some very good e-portfolios presented for moderation.

Although not all the assessment seen was totally within national standards, the main aspects of this unit had been understood and some of the evidence seen was of a good standard. Some centres seemed unsure of the requirements for the higher mark bands. These issues will be discussed in the relevant strands. Stands (b) and (d) were often over assessed.

Centres are reminded that the e-portfolios should be in a format that can be read in a browser and the files should link together. There were instances of links not working and files being in Word documents. As such, centres are referred to the e-portfolio section in the Standard Ways of Working and also the Guidance to Centres on the Edexcel website. Overall, most candidates provided an e-portfolio where the files had logical folders and file names and the index or home page file was easy to find. 'Readme' files helped the moderator access the e-portfolio work more readily.

Candidates could access higher marks if they demonstrated effective evaluative skills. Some candidates tended to say what they saw or what they did rather than recommend a conclusion on what they thought was good or bad.

Candidates are recommended to proof read their work thoroughly, in order to eradicate uncorrected errors. This may be addressed by referring candidates to the quality assurance section of 2.10 of the unit specification.

There were some instances of plagiarism observed for this unit in this window. Some of the evidence submitted for strand (c) had been downloaded from websites but no acknowledgement given. Similarly, there were also many instances of diagrams taken directly from textbooks and submitted for strand (b).

Assessors are advised to use the e-sheet to indicate whether deadlines are met or independent work carried out by candidates and how their marks were awarded.

Strand (a) - The Transactional Website

There are 18marks allocated to this strand and candidates need to look at a range of aspects in order to be able to access them all. There were instances of candidates achieving mark bands 2 and 3 where the evidence only supported mark band 1.

It was good to see that many candidates had chosen their own transactional website to evaluate. However, some candidates chose sites that did not have full transactional (e-commerce) facilities and there were instances where whole cohorts appeared to have evaluated the same website. There are a large number of acceptable sites and so candidates should be encouraged to choose a different web site to investigate.

Most candidates explored the navigation of the sites and explained the process to purchase on line. Some of them evaluated the appearance of the site and looked at ways the site tried to entice customers. However, the higher mark bands required candidates to show greater attention to the range of facilities and features within the site. Some candidates did explore how the site evaluated and gathered information from site visitors (as in 2.5 of the unit specification) but these were in the minority.

Candidates could access the higher mark bands if they looked at some of the suggestions made in the Assessment Guidance for this strand and also looked more widely at 2.3 and 2.5 of the unit specification.

It should be emphasised that candidates are required to evaluate one commercial transactional website. Some candidates spent time evaluating and comparing several websites which is not a requirement of the assessment criteria.

Many candidates stated and described features but did not evaluate them. Some of the improvements suggested related to the products being sold rather than the transactional website itself.

Strand (b) - Back-Office Processes

10 marks are allocated to this strand which requires a set of diagrams explaining the back-office processes. Many candidates made a good attempt to relate their evidence to the transactional website they had evaluated however some candidates only explained the front end aspects of online purchasing. Candidates are not required to find out from organisations how their back-offices work as it is unlikely that they would be able to do so. Therefore, centres and candidates should refer to 2.4 of the unit specification. Candidates who make a good attempt to relate their evidence to their sites do demonstrate understanding.

Candidates are required to produce their own diagrams, which can be in a variety of formats. It should be noted that to achieve mark band 1, candidates are expected to produce more than one diagram. Information flow diagrams, Data Flow Diagrams and Flow Charts are all acceptable formats but are not an exhaustive list. It is unlikely one particular type of diagram can cover both the information flow and describe the process.

Centres should ensure candidates produce their own diagrams and do not replicate exact examples from the Edexcel website or from textbooks as was found in some cases. There were also instances of candidates from the same centre having identical diagrams.

To achieve a higher mark band candidates should annotate and explain their diagrams as this demonstrates their understanding. However, explanations on their own without diagrams do not address this assessment strand.

Strand (c) - Threats to Data

It was good to see that many candidates addressed this strand well. It should be noted that information relating to security can be easily accessed and this is reflected in the number of marks allocated to the strand (6).

Not all candidates realised the several different aspects to this strand, ie identifying potential threats to customer data, measures taken to protect data, legislation and then the assessment of the effectiveness of the measures taken to protect the data.

Some candidates explained the legislation they had chosen to look at and did not just copy the wording of the various acts into their e-portfolios. Also, some candidates examined the transactional website they had evaluated for strand (a) and made some very good observations of any security issues relating to the site. These are examples of good practice.

Some candidates had not appreciated the need to evaluate their findings and draw conclusions, with respect to the effectiveness of the measures and the legislation. This restricted their access to the strand's full marks. The Assessment Guidance would provide some assistance to candidates here.

Strand (d) – Database

General Comments

20 marks are allocated to this strand. Candidates could have gained higher marks by looking at the requirements in the mark bands and thinking about the order they undertake their work. Candidates need to examine the data files and then create a structure for the data. The structure needs to be tested with some test data to see if it works. Although it was good to see input masks being used but, on the whole, few validation rules were observed.

Candidates are required to produce at least two related tables and they should try to ensure they evidence manipulation of their databases using these relationships. Much of the evidence was based on one table only. Some candidates used design screen shots to show how they had manipulated their database. The shots can show the entities used, search criteria, grouping, sorting, calculations, etc, and thereby evidence how the final results were implemented. However, candidates are not expected to show every step along the way. The emphasis should be on relevant screen prints and annotation.

Candidates should be encouraged to decide for themselves what queries they will use by examining the data. Such queries should enable them to produce trends which show how an item of information varies over a period of time. Simply identifying the highest selling product is unlikely to enable access to the higher mark bands. It was good to see that most candidates had used graphical format to portray their trends clearly and most had made an attempt to analyse and explain the trends. To achieve full marks the candidates need to make sensible recommendations based on the trends identified. The key part of this strand is the ability to use a database as a tool to help in the decision making process.

Candidates are required to manipulate a large dataset which should be no less than 100 records. Candidates are not required to key in data as was seen in some instances. Candidates are required to identify some significant trends for mark band 2 and interpret these and make recommendations for mark band 3. This means it is important that the dataset is sufficiently large and complex to enable trends to be found. Candidates should examine how large amounts of data are used within organisations to help in the decision making process. Observing results over a period of time can identify a trend which can be used to help an organisation become more effective.

Strand (e) - Evaluation

This strand was not addressed effectively. There are 6 marks available in this strand and the evaluations seen were mainly in mark band 1. Candidates needed to address the evaluation of the performance of their database. Most spoke about what they did when they put their e-portfolio together. A few described problems encountered and how they overcame them. More emphasis needs to be given to evaluating the database. An analysis of how the structure of the database can be improved and the effects this will have could contribute to the candidate achieving a higher mark. It may be that the poor evidence in the identification of trends made it difficult to address this strand well.

The incorporation of feedback from others was usually ineffective and it was difficult to see who had provided feedback and in some cases what they said. Feedback should be incorporated into a candidate's recommendations for improvements to access all the marks allocated to this strand.

Unit 3 Principal Examiner's Report

General comments

Generally candidates were much better prepared for the examination this series. There was a better understanding of the time management requirements and the relaxation of the rules about the printing time at the end provided many candidates with the leeway to complete all the tasks.

Many candidates, however, were not sufficiently prepared. Some candidates showed no sign of having seen either the model or the scenario prior to the examination. Time management may have been a problem for the low to middle attaining candidates and there were still a large number of candidates who either did not attempt activities 4 and 5 or simply submitted a couple of sentences for each. Candidates may be spending too long looking for the perfect solution; the models and scenarios are meant to represent real life situations and as such will probably not have a perfect answer. Even with the extra lee-way afforded to candidates, time is deliberately tight and I would reiterate the advice given for the previous exam series.

   i.   Only the report activity is marked for quality of written communication; all other activities can be answered in note form.
   ii. The suggested timings are given to help the candidate and should be adhered to, especially the timing for the 'using the model' activity. If the candidate has time left at the end of the activity they may revisit the earlier questions but they should never return to the 'using the model' activities.

Overall marks varied between very low and very high indicating a well differentiated examination.

Activity 1

On the whole this activity was reasonably well done with most candidates obtaining 7 or more marks out of 10. A significant number of candidates attained full marks. Most candidates could find enough points in the scenario to score well by identifying the situation. However, many could have scored higher by identifying what they had to do. Most seemed to know what they had to do because they did it; they were just unable to state it.

Activity 2

Generally, candidates did not achieve the higher mark bands on this activity. Most candidates managed to identify certain aspects of each source which could be considered as contributing towards its accuracy and nearly all candidates made their choice clear. However, candidates could have achieved a higher mark band by describing information they would like to know about the marketing survey.

Activity 3

On the whole, most candidates scored heavily on this activity. Some candidates failed to achieve the higher mark bands as they omitted the evidence required or illustrated it in an inappropriate form. A number of candidates were unable to demonstrate their spreadsheet skills and so did not achieve the higher mark bands.

Most candidates managed to come up with a solution, if not the best one. Some candidates did not arrive at a solution and this seemed to be due to a lack of understanding of how the model worked. On the other hand a significant number of candidates got close to the optimum solution.

Activity 4

This activity tests the candidates' ability to report their findings in a professional manner. A significant number of marks are available for the findings and the quality of presentation. Candidates should include more headings and ensure they check the spellings identified by the spell-checker. Some candidates included a chart, however higher markers were not achieved due to incorrect labelling or including the wrong kind of chart (line graph or pie chart showing the profit at each ticket price). It is not a coincidence that only the higher attaining candidates scored well in this activity.

Activity 5

The answers to this activity were generally in the lower mark bands. Many candidates did not submit anything under this activity or made only superficial comments. However, some candidates made some extremely intelligent criticisms of the model and suggested innovative improvements which should be encouraged.

Administration

Most candidates did not supply the activity number and the other required items in the header or footer of their printouts. The examination documents are considered to be the e-portfolio described in the 'Standard Ways of Working' section of the specification (practical restrictions mean it is not possible at present to accept the examination work in an e-portfolio). Not having output correctly labelled or in the wrong order is considered to be not "creating an appropriate structure". Future examinations will have marks awarded for Standard Ways of Working and candidates should label their work and order them correctly to achieve these marks.

Printouts should be attached to the cover sheet via a single treasury tag to the hole available in the top left corner of the inside of the cover sheet as shown in the instructions. There should be no need to punch extra holes in the cover sheet and the treasury tag should be passed through the cover sheet and the printouts only once.

Unit 4 Principal Moderator's Report

General comments

The presentation of the e-portfolios was in general very good, the structure allowed easy navigation between the various sections. The practical element caused confusion with assessors awarding marks on what they may have seen in the classroom rather than the evidence submitted in the e-portfolio.

Strand (a) - Needs Analysis

Many candidates did not produce a proper needs analysis for a client with complex needs. Candidates that used a real scenario were able to develop their ideas more successfully. Although it is quite acceptable to use a centre provided scenario, it should be written in such a way that candidates will have to do some further investigation and fact finding. Candidates are expected to use at least one investigative technique and more than one if they wish to achieve marks outside of mark band 1. Candidates had little problems finding two existing systems but many could not describe or evaluate them.

Strand (b) - System Specification

Candidates were often unaware that the system needs to be recommended to the client. It was often difficult to separate this evidence from that of strand (a). The hardware and software selected should be justified to the client in non-technical language so that the client understands what they are purchasing. Copying the specifications from an advert does not always address this area. Ergonomic considerations needed to be given and related to the recommended system. Candidates often selected furniture, keyboards, etc which claimed to have ergonomic qualities but failed to explain why they would be suitable.

Strand (c) - System Build

The system build does not need to relate to the system recommended in strand (b) but there should be some indication as to the requirements of this system. Frequently candidates had been given credit for setting up a system to meet the client's requirements even though there was no evidence of the identification of such needs.

There were some excellent examples of practical work undertaken in the form of short video clips or photos' clearly showing the candidate at work. However, much of the practical work was poorly evidenced, and in some cases it was not clear that the candidates had actually undertaken the practical work. There were frequent occasions of photos being submitted that were not the candidates own, eg photos with a web address clearly printed on them. This should be discouraged.

Many candidates evidenced installing software but the evidence for the configuration activities did not reflect the candidates' level of work. Candidates should be advised to address several of the activities listed in 4.9 of the unit specification.

Strand (d) - Testing

There was evidence of some good practice with candidates giving detailed accounts of how they tested the machine and also some end user testing. Photographs and screen dumps of error messages were included. Often detailed test plans were included but with no evidence to show that the testing had actually taken place or any amendments that had to be made.

Strand (e)

Evaluations were often very general and unrelated to the performance of the system. Feedback from others was often vague and lacking in evidence. Candidates' evaluation of their own performance was done quite well.

Unit 5 Principal Moderator's Report

General comments

The e-portfolios presented for moderation this series reflected candidates working across the whole range of marks, ie 0-60. There were a number of excellent e-portfolios clearly demonstrating centres who had interpreted the assessment criteria well and had assessed to national standards. However, this was not the case across all e-portfolios seen and comments are made on the individual strands.

Not all candidates included the websites created in their e-portfolios. There should be a link from the e-portfolio to the final version website.

Some evidence did not address the assessment criteria for the different strands very well and centres should ensure that the candidates are taught the unit specification prior to embarking on the end project. Centres should also appreciate that the planning aspects form the introduction to the A2 unit 8, Project Management. Section 5.1 of the unit specification clearly states the stages of the software development lifecycle which forms the basis of the approach to this unit.

Strand (a) - Outline Project Plan

Some of the project plans produced appeared to have been done retrospectively. Many of the plans were very brief and did not illustrate the tasks that would be undertaken when planning and developing a website for a client. Many candidates did produce Gantt charts using suitable software which is good practice. However, some of the plans appeared to be just a list of tasks and did not demonstrate understanding of project planning. Also, timescales allocated were unrealistic, tasks were planned in the incorrect order, there was no break down of subtasks and there were minimal references to any liaison with the client. Section 5.2 of the unit specification lists the main areas that should be included in the plan.

To access all the marks in mark band 1, candidates are required to demonstrate the use of their plan to monitor progress throughout the duration of the project. Producing copies of the plan at different stages of the project, annotations of the plan, project logs and minutes of meetings with the client, can all help evidence the monitoring process. In many cases this evidence was not provided.

Strand (b) - Customer Requirements

This strand addresses sections 5.3 and 5.4 of the unit specification. 16 marks are available for this strand.

There was evidence that some candidates appeared to have generated and decided on their own website with no real client. Without a client it is difficult to address this strand. The assessor, and possibly other colleagues, can pose as the 'client' which is probably the easiest way to address this issue.

Some candidates addressed this strand well and investigated the client's needs fully using a variety of methods to establish the requirements for the proposed website. Interviews with the client were documented well, and some candidates asked a variety of different types of people to complete questionnaires, ie the client or users. Many questionnaires enabled comments to be given to provide more useful information. Some candidates presented the evidence in the form of a report to the client and used headings that related to 5.3 of the unit specification. This is good practice.

Design work, such as site maps, storyboards and designs is required so that the client may decide whether what has been developed accords with what is needed. Some candidates produced page mock-ups in the software to be used which is an acceptable way of producing designs. Attention needs to be given to the topics listed in 5.4 of the unit specification and it is expected the designs will address many of these.

Strand (c) - Development

There are 20 marks allocated to this strand which covers several areas. Many candidates did not appear to understand the prototyping process required in the implementation of the website. It is an essential aspect of mark band 1 to evidence the prototyping and show how feedback from others (client and potential users) enables the initial design to be refined.

Most candidates produced evidence that a website was created. As already mentioned, candidates should include a link to the actual website which is part of the e-portfolio. Some websites were incomplete and others were of a standard that could not take the candidate beyond the lower mark bands. Section 5.8 of the unit specification gives guidance on the skills candidates are expected to demonstrate in this strand. There were also excellent examples of websites where it was clear the candidates had really understood the process and used the software effectively.

The implementation should also demonstrate evidence of formative and summative testing. Prototyping and liaison with the client and proposed users can provide evidence for this. Candidates must ensure they use the feedback given from the prototyping to refine and improve the website until the final version is created and is handed over to the client. This feedback can help evidence strand (e).

Mark band 3 requires candidates to evidence all areas of the strand and carry out extensive testing to demonstrate that a fully functional website has been produced which meets the client needs. Very often there is no reference to the client's original needs in the testing of the final website.

Some candidates tested the websites in different browsers and had given thought to different screen resolutions. This is good practice. Section 5.6 of the unit specification gives guidance on the areas that should be tested.

It should be pointed out that only the final version of the website needs to be included in the portfolio. A selection of appropriate screen shots can be included in the prototyping evidence.

Strand (d) - Evaluation

Many candidates made a good attempt at evaluating their websites but would have gained more marks if they had based their evaluations on how the website created matched the needs specified by the client. There should be evidence of feedback from the users of the site and this should be incorporated into the evaluation. The proposals for the improvement of the site should relate to any original objectives not met as well as enhancements.

Strand (e) - Outline Proposal

Some candidates did appear to have realised that they had covered some of the relevant areas when evaluating the transactional website for 6952. Very often the evidence seemed to be combined with the evidence for strand (d).

Candidates who addressed this strand well produced a proper report for the proposal to the client. A proposal to enhance the website created to support e-commerce. Some of the enhancements put forward did not address this issue and were just cosmetic enhancements. Section 5.7 of the unit specification provides a list of suitable areas. The proposal needs to clearly define the recommendation and justify the reasons why this would be of benefit to the client. To access the higher mark bands the proposal needs to give details of how the upgrade would be implemented and what would be involved in this process.

Unit 6 Principal Moderator's Report

General comments

The presentation of the e-portfolios was in general very good. The structure allowed easy navigation between the various sections.

Strand (a) - Upgrade

Some candidates did explain what was being upgraded and provided clear screen shots and photographs of what was happening. However, a large number of candidates failed to provide sufficient evidence of the practical work being undertaken. The most common upgrades were to install more RAM or a larger Hard Disk. Candidates often did not include any evidence of testing the upgrade. Software upgrades varied, the most common being upgrading Windows. The evidence for this was far better but once again only very limited testing; it either worked or it didn't work.

Strand (b) - On-screen Support Manual

The content for this strand was often very good but candidates failed to recognise the fact that the manual was to be viewed on screen. Many included a PDF document which covered all the areas listed in 6.2 of the unit specification although there was insufficient detail to enable someone else to maintain the system.

Strand (c) - Collaborative Working Tools

Candidates were able to identify and describe the collaborative working tools listed in the specification. The demonstration of the set up was usually well evidenced but not all candidates produced evidence of it being used.

Strand (d) - Communication needs of a small business

Many candidates discussed communication methods but failed to relate this to an SME, much of the evidence was more like a set of theory notes. The recommendations should be justified for Mark Band 2 and 3. Candidates are recommended to use clear non-technical language suitable for their audience.

Grade Boundaries – June 2006

Unit 1

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 2

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 3

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	61	53	45	37	29
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 4

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 5

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Unit 6

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

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