Principal Moderator Feedback

January 2013

Applied GCE ICT 6951

Unit 1: The Information Age

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the world's leading learning company. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk for our BTEC qualifications.
Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

If you have any subject specific questions about this specification that require the help of a subject specialist, you can speak directly to the subject team at Pearson.
Their contact details can be found on this link: www.edexcel.com/teachingservices.

You can also use our online Ask the Expert service at www.edexcel.com/ask. You will need an Edexcel username and password to access this service.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere
Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Contents

General comments

The majority work seen was appropriate and the majority of candidates demonstrated good standards. The work produced on the whole met the requirements of the specification. However, it is still the case that many of e-portfolios moderated do not give any indication that the content is to be read in 100 years time. This is the main focus of the brief that should be given to candidates, and the audience and purpose should be clear from the outset in the e-books produced. Better candidates make this clear from the start, meaning that the work is better focused and suited to both audience and purpose.

The accuracy of the marking by centres is improving. Many examples of good work were seen at the higher end of the mark range.

The specification states the e-book will be available to people using World Wide Web, and so they must be accessible using a web browser. The best e-books were produced using web authoring software and often make use of frames or similar techniques to improve the visual appearance and navigation. Unfortunately there were still 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. This type of approach does not produce an e-book in line with the specification.

Most assessors made appropriate comments on the e-record sheets which were helpful, and showed how the marks were awarded this often helps the moderator to agree the marks awarded by the centre.

Stand (a) On-line services:

In this section candidates should research the range of topics listed in the specification to show how online services are used and function. The e-book should contain at least five of the services listed. To achieve the higher mark ranges for this strand candidates should produce broad and detailed descriptions of the five chosen areas, supported by well chosen examples of each service described.

Some good examples were seen in which candidates described the facilities and services available, and evaluated them in terms of their functionality. The best work uses illustrations in the form of screen shots, photographs and sometimes small video clips to show for example how email is used.

Better candidates also included evaluative comments, sometimes in the form of advantages and disadvantages of the service. Weaker candidates still tend to simply evaluate websites for this strand, rather than the services themselves.

Stand (b) Life in the information age:

This section is about how the technologies available to us impacts on personal life, social life and working life. The majority of candidates are now covering this section correctly; however there are some who still place too much emphasis on how the technology works.

The better candidates are able to see the difference between this strand and the previous one, their work covers how these aspects of peoples' lives have been changed by the use of information technology. Most candidates find it easy to describe how they are using the technology in their own life style, however only the better candidates are able to use good examples of how the life others is affected.

In this strand it is expected that candidates will use a variety of sources to locate information to support their work. 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. The bibliography should be a standalone document outside of the e-book, presented in PDF format. Some candidates continue to present this as part of the e-book which is not entirely appropriate.

Some of the best work includes as sources interviews with candidates peers, and other adults, there were some good examples were candidates used the opportunity to introduce a short video or audio clip. It is important however not to simply present these as entire content of this section but to comment on and use this material to illustrate their findings.

Stand (c) Digital Divide:

Evidence was often weaker than previous sections. Although coverage of this strand has improved in more recent series, there is however a tendency for candidates to simply copy material from internet sources rather than write in their own words. The better candidates appreciated the need to research the extent of the divide and the measures being taken to bridge the gap and then presented the facts together with their own opinions.

Weaker candidates often produced only a general discussion of the divide with very little specific detail at the three levels expected. They often listed reasons for the divide but did not evaluate the impact or the extent

The measures taken to bridge the gap were often only briefly considered. Some of the better candidates use specific examples of working projects both at home and overseas that attempting to bridge the divide. Government measures to bridge the gap were rarely mentioned.

Stand (d) The e-book:

Most candidates had used appropriate software, although there are some centres using software that was not appropriate for an e-book. In some extreme cases it was not possible to moderate the work, in the form in which it was presented. The exact software and formats acceptable are given on the Edexcel website, centres should ensure that they review this information.

The specification requires an e-book that can be read in a browser, the best approach is to use web authoring software, of other software that can create pages in html.

Centres are using a range of techniques to make the e-book user friendly, and a range of techniques were used to either avoid scrolling or to minimise the effect of it. The most important thing is that the user is always able to navigate around the e-book and that vital links are not lost when the page scrolls. The use of frames is one way of achieving this.

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

Stand (e) Components and structure:

This strand covers a number of aspects of the work.

Better Candidates included an adequate range of appropriate components and were awarded marks at the top end of the range. Candidates clearly enjoy the construction aspects of this unit and many good examples of well constructed e-books with a variety of navigation methods were seen

Some candidates included inappropriate multimedia, for example, un-necessary animated gif files, or sounds that did nothing to enhance the e-book. It is important to note that the for higher mark ranges the components need to appropriate and used effectively.

It was sometimes difficult to decide if the components were ready made or original better candidates included an assets list as part of a bibliography or referred to the component in the text in a way that identified its origin.

Separate evidence of testing is still often provided in the form of test plans and screen dumps, as stated in previous examiner reports this is not necessary Testing is demonstrated by the fact that a fully function e-book had been produced.

Stand (f) Evaluation :

Most candidates managed to make brief evaluative comments about their e-book and their own performance. Candidates solicited and recorded feedback comments often in the form of questionnaires. The inclusion of completed questionnaires alone does not provide evidence that they have acted on or analysed the feedback.

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 well 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 "Goole" "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 websites, the specification requires a wide range of different sources to used for strands (b) and (c).

General Administration

Most samples were correctly submitted with folders clearly labelled with centre numbers, candidate number and first 2 letters of surname and first of forename. The e-record sheet naming convention is the same.

The centre assessor should use the e-record as an opportunity to help the moderator find the evidence required to agree the marks given.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx