

Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2013

GCE Applied ICT (6951) Paper 01 The
Information Age

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General comments

The majority of the work which were seen was appropriate and gave the candidates good opportunities to meet the requirements of the specification. Work was seen covering the full range of marks.

The aim of the task was to produce an e-book for an audience in 100 years time, however many of the candidates seemed to be unaware of this, and appeared to be writing for an unspecified audience or produced it for the teacher. The stronger candidates included an introduction in their work as well as outlining who their target audience would be and making clear that their product would be for people in the future.

The accuracy of the marking by centres was improved again this year; good examples were seen at the higher end of the mark range.

Centres are reminded that the e-book should only use file formats that are listed in the moderator's tool kit. There were still examples of work submitted in inappropriate file formats. The e-book should be viewable in an internet browser; therefore e-books produced as PowerPoint presentations which had not been converted to html format are not in line with expectations.

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:

A good range of marks were awarded for this section with some candidates scoring full marks.

Better candidates produced very detailed descriptions, describing the purpose and functions of each of the services supported by good examples. They also included evaluative comments, sometimes in the form of advantages and disadvantages of the service. The weaker candidates tended to simply evaluate websites for this strand, rather than the services themselves.

Examples of work in MB3 contained detailed descriptions of each aspect chosen, supported by well-chosen images and illustrations that supported and enhanced the text.

QWC levels generally matched the mark band standard in which the evidence was placed.

Stand (b) Life in the information age:

The purpose of this strand is to give the reader a picture of how life in the information age is affected by the numerous technologies that we use.

The majority of assessors are accurately assessing this section. The content for this section was generally of a good standard; some good examples of work in MB3 were seen.

The better candidates were able to see the difference between this strand and Strand (a) by describing how aspects of people's lives have been changed by the use of information technology.

It is expected in this section that candidates will describe how the technology affects personal and working life styles. However weaker candidates still describe the technology again or review the technology with little or no reference to the impact on life. Candidates could 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

It is also essential that in this section candidates use research from a range of sources and not just the internet as is often the case. To gain marks above MB1 candidates must use sources of information other than the internet. One of the main sources of evidence available to the moderator is the candidate's bibliography. Frequently this consisted of a list of URLs and nothing more.

Stand (c) Digital Divide:

This section is often covered in less detail than the other strands, perhaps due to time constraints, with the topic coming last in the specification. Most candidates find it easy to look at the divide at an international level; the stronger candidates looked in detail at the divide that exists nationally and locally.

The measures taken to bridge the gap were often only briefly considered. Some of the better candidates used specific examples of working projects both at home and overseas that attempted to bridge the divide. However many candidates had focussed on specific projects for bridging the divide without considering their impact.

The Candidates which were often listed 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.

Stand (d) The e-book:

The choice of software to produce the e-book had a major impact on this strand. Most candidates used appropriate software, although some centres submitted work using software that was not appropriate for an e-book. The

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

Very few candidates addressed the awareness of audience and purpose and did not demonstrate that the e-book was to be looked at in 100 years time, a simple introduction or title page would make it clear that they had understood the brief.

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. It is important to note that in order to achieve the higher mark ranges, the components need to be appropriate and used effectively. They should add to the user experience rather than act as a distraction.

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.

Many centres still include separate evidence of testing 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 has 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 "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 to use for strands (b) and (c).

General Administration

The sample should be sent to the moderator on a single CD for each unit, the CD should contain all the candidates in the sample, the work of the highest and lowest scoring candidates should also be included as extras if not already in the sample selected.

Samples should be submitted with folders clearly labelled with centre numbers, candidate number and first 2 letters of surname and first letter of forename. It helps if the e-record sheet naming convention is the same

[centre #]_[candidate #]_[first two letters of surname]_[first letter of first name].

The centre assessor should use the e-record as an opportunity to help the moderator find the evidence required to agree the marks given. The comments by assessors in some cases only contained brief, one line comments; in other cases no comments at all were provided. Some centres placed all units on the same CD, this can cause problems for the moderation team as samples of units frequently need to be sent to different people during the moderation process.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwant to/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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