

Principal Moderator Feedback

January 2012

Applied GCE

6952 01 – The Digital Economy

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Unit 2: The Digital Economy (6952)

General Comments

As the entry is much smaller than the summer window, centres are advised to read the Principal's report for Summer 2011 which contains more detailed feedback relating to the 5 strands for this unit.

It was good to see the majority of eportfolios were assessed realistically this window with marks across the range of 11-52. It would appear that centres are responding well to feedback in reports and inset events.

There were many examples this window of work being placed in the correct mark band, but awarded all the marks rather than the range available used more accurately. This led to some eportfolios not being assessed to national standards.

Comments on strand a

Some excellent work was seen for this strand, with more detailed descriptions and evaluative comments included throughout the report. It was observed that more improvements relating to design features of the website were being given and many of these realistic improvements. Some candidates had been placed in mark band 2, although little evidence relating to the less obvious features of the website were described and evaluated. Some candidates are supplying very large screen shots but little description.

Comments on strand b

There were rather a lot of diagrams lacking detail seen this window which would support marks in mark band 1 rather than mark band 2, where they were placed. Diagrams were missing correct arrows, yes/no options. It was also observed that some assessors correctly identified weaknesses but still awarded too many marks. Candidates had also been awarded marks in mark band 3 although there was a lack of reference to external agencies in the diagrams. It was good to see that some candidates had related the evidence to their transactional websites, demonstrating good understanding of the processes.

Comments on strand c

Some very good evidence was seen for this strand, with the evidence being presented from the point of view of the organisation which is correct. Many candidates had looked at the effectiveness of all measures and not just legislation which is good practice. Some candidates had produced good balanced arguments on effectiveness but had not been awarded the mark in mark band 3.

Comments on strand d

There were some centres which appeared to be undertaking a very structured approach to this strand, with the result that candidates did not demonstrate the independence required if accessing marks in mark band 2 and above. It would also seem that some candidates are using the same dataset which has been used for the teaching of the strand. There are several datasets available on the Applied GCE ICT page of Edexcel.com and candidates should use a completely different dataset for their assessment to the one used for teaching. There were examples of a cohort using the same validation rules, queries and presenting exactly the same output.

However, it was pleasing to note that many centres are delivering this strand well, with candidates producing some excellent evidence which is well assessed. There were more examples of candidates creating and testing the structure prior to importing the dataset and then testing again after importation.

There were still candidates who are not evidencing the queries used to produce the output or only evidencing one type of query several times, e.g. all grouped queries or lack of use of more than one table. There needs to be more use of search criteria, not just count and sum, and the relational aspects of the database to support some of the marks awarded. There were many instances of candidates placed in mark band 3 when the evidence fitted mark band 2.

Some of the output was poorly presented with little thought given to fields used in reports and a sensible title. A report titled "Query1" is not meaningful. The same applied to some of the charts and graphs with poor use of main title and axis titles. Some of the charts were so cluttered they were not effective.

Comments on strand e

A high percentage of candidates are still producing a narrative on how they used Access rather than evaluating the performance of the database they had created.

The improvement required for mark band 3 needs to reflect a sensible improvement to the database created.

There were many examples of candidates awarded marks in mark band 2 for feedback, although no reference had been made to the feedback in their evaluative comments. Listing feedback and not using it does not address mark band 2.

Again, in the evaluation of their own performance, candidates often said what they had done and they had done it well with no evaluative content at all.

Grade Boundaries

Centres are reminded that the GCE in Applied ICT is an Awarded qualification. As such, grade boundaries are subject to review each series for both written paper and coursework units.

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

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