

Principal Moderator Feedback

June 2011

Applied GCE ICT
6955 01 - Web Development

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General Comments

The entry for this unit is relatively small. There were few eportfolios at the higher end of the mark spectrum. Overall assessment was realistic for the majority of centres. However, it was disappointing to note weaknesses in some centres which suggested that previous moderator reports to the centre and also the Principal Moderator's reports for this unit had not been taken into account.

One major aspect which impinges on student evidence is the use of a client. Few candidates produced convincing evidence that liaison with a client had been undertaken to produce the evidence for this unit. There needs to be explicit evidence that a client was used, not just a weak reference to "my client". A teacher or some other appropriate person can role play the part of a client. This is essential if 5.1 of the unit specification have to be properly addressed and enable all the marks across the strands to be accessible.

There was also evidence that many of the eportfolios had been created using heavily structured assignments, some of which had been used for years and had not been adapted. Some of these assignments did not match the assessment grid properly and did not address the revised specification.

There is still evidence that Assessors are awarding marks across all strands based on the standard of the website produced and not the requirements of each individual strand.

There is still a lack of understanding of difference between design, implementation and prototyping and what evidence is appropriate for strands b and c.

Candidates supplied the websites created which is correct practice. There was evidence relating to all strands but often the processes behind the production of the website were poorly evidenced.

Comments on strand a

Most candidates produced project plans in **graphical format** which is a requirement in order to access this strand. It is good to see many candidates using project management software which is best practice. Other candidates used spreadsheet software which is acceptable for this AS unit. Those candidates producing Word tables and DiDA type action plans were not able to access the marks in this strand.

However, few candidates provided sufficient evidence to address the higher mark bands and most produced a poor gantt chart, with no real evidence that it had been used to help progress the design and implementation of the website.

Some plans did not appear to have been produced at the start of the process. Many did not have realistic timescales or include the aspects listed in 5.2 of the unit specification. It was disappointing to see many included the evaluation and proposal, which is not required, but then neglected to state the date the website would be handed over to the client. This has been pointed out in previous reports. The agreed handover date of the completed website to the client should be clearly stated in the plan and updates.

The comments made in last summer's report are still relevant: "Few candidates evidenced the use of the plan throughout the implementation of the websites which is required in order to access all the marks in MB1. The best evidence is updating the plan and including the different versions in the eportfolio complete with annotation explaining updates. Project logs/diaries and minutes of meetings with the client can all support the use of the plan."

To access all the marks in mark band 1 there should be evidence the plan was used to monitor progress throughout the project period.

This refers to the design and implementation of the website up to and including the handover to the client.

Candidates accessing mark band 2 need to produce detailed plans addressing 5.2 of the unit specification and demonstrate good use of it throughout the project period.

Candidates accessing mark band 3 should have included realistic contingency time in their detailed plans and demonstrate effective use of the plan and updates throughout the project period.

Comments on strand b

It is disappointing to see few candidates addressing this strand well and it was often generously assessed. The comments made in last year's report were relevant to this series. Most candidates did produce some evidence to support both main aspects of this strand, i.e. the Investigation into the client needs and the Design. However, most evidence was poor and generously assessed. There was obvious confusion as to what design, strand b is and what is prototyping which is part of strand c. The lack of a proper client impacts on the marks for this strand. Candidates did not seem to know the difference between prototyping and implementation.

Many candidates had work placed at the top of mark band 2 or in mark band 3, although there was very limited evidence of the client needs and often this was not drawn together well in a Requirements Analysis. There should be a variety of techniques used if to move into mark band 2. Very often, there was a blank questionnaire, no real profile of the client or there were a few details under headings which appeared to be part of the assignment brief. Some candidates analysed competitive websites which was useful but others looked at irrelevant websites or hadn't defined the client, so it was not clear if the evidence was useful.

There was evidence of headings being used and candidates writing a brief sentence underneath, which does not demonstrate progression to an AS unit and does not address the requirements of mark band 2.

Candidates who addressed this section well had presented the evidence in the form of a report addressed to the client.

Designs were often poorly drawn scanned in images which did not address 5.4 well. Some candidates had screen shots of the final website which is not correct.

The designs should be well presented and reflect the research carried out to establish the client needs. A good range of features should be included and detailed.

The structure diagram was usually produced to a satisfactory standard. The flow charts are still poor and often taken from unit 2 rather than showing the main user pathways through the site.

Comments on strand c

Once again, most of the marks were allocated to the website produced and there were instances where that was the only evidence produced for this strand. In fact there are 3 distinct areas, the prototyping of the design, the actual website and testing.

The prototyping was very poorly evidenced with few candidates including convincing evidence that proper prototyping had been undertaken. Good prototyping is a form of formative testing and addresses aspects of 5.1. To access all the marks in mark band 1 there should be evidence of some prototyping to improve and refine the initial design. Too often this consisted of cosmetic changes, i.e. colour, and weak reference to "my client". Better candidates had clear evidence of meetings with the client with explanations of changes required, with before and after screen shots. To access the higher mark bands there needs to be evidence of user feedback which, ideally, is the target audience. There was little evidence of screenshots showing the changes made. Before and after screen shots would do this.

The standard of websites produced varied in quality. It was good to see the majority of students included the websites in their eportfolios. This is a requirement for this strand. The final website should be clearly labelled as such and functional (fully functional for mark band 3). Some evidence had been placed in mark band 3 although a very limited range of software skills was demonstrated – 5.8 of the unit specification has a suggested list. Although there were some excellent websites produced, there were also a good number of very poor examples that did not reflect the progression expected of candidates on an AS course undertaking a Web Development unit.

Pages of repetitive content are not required. Fewer pages demonstrating more skill in the use of html and software tools is a more effective way of evidencing this strand. To access mark band 3 it is expected a good range of features be included in the websites, such as multimedia content, interactive components, simple animations, replacement text for visually disabled access.

Those candidates who had provided evidence that they had prototyped the design often also included evidence of prototyping of a working model through to final model, clearly utilising comments from the client and/or target audience. This evidenced formative testing well. More candidates produced evidence of summative testing and some of this was well done and addressed most of 5.6. The weaker candidates seemed to concentrate on buttons and links, which really only supports the limited testing required for mark band 1.

Some websites demonstrated little adherence to standard ways of working. The quality assurance of the content was not always undertaken with uncorrected errors, pictures not displaying. Few candidates evidenced legislation and codes of practice with the acknowledgement of sources and respect of copyright. Most candidates had a link to the finished website

from the eportfolio, but some had not included this and folders and files had to be examined in order to find the right html file to access the website.

Few candidates produced explicit evidence that they understood the basic principles of HTML and were able to modify and edit HTML code. This is expected for the higher marks band to support good use of software tools. However, it was good to see some of the better eportfolios had evidenced 5.5 well, which is part of the requirements of mark band 3.

Comments on strand d

The evidence for this strand is improving and the assessment is reasonably accurate. There is still a tendency for candidates to write a narrative of what they had done, rather than evaluate the performance (does it work?) and functionality (does it do what the client wanted?) of the website created. Some candidates clearly did not understand the difference between performance and functionality.

Very often feedback was listed, but no reference was made to this in the evaluative comments. Despite this, often marks in mark band 2 had been awarded. Candidates who referred to testing and prototyping and made reference to the feedback received from others, e.g. target audience, addressed the performance of the website effectively. Likewise the candidates who evaluated the website against the original client needs addressed functionality well. As in previous series, some candidates are evaluating their own performance and, sometimes, the eportfolio, which are not requirements of this strand.

Comments on strand e

Again, it was good to see many more candidates presenting the evidence correctly, i.e. a Proposal addressed to the client in an appropriate format. The best evidence was in the form of a professionally presented report.

Overall this strand was much better addressed with some sensible recommendations. However, some candidates recommended an enhancement for functionality from the list for 5.7, but chose something that was not relevant to the client's needs and website created, for example, an ecommerce site for a client who has nothing to sell.

Comments on Administrative Procedures

Most samples were received by the stated deadline and correct documentation was provided, i.e. candidate authentication sheets and e-sheets. Some of the e-sheets were not named using the file naming conventions specified in the Guidance for Centres: Moderation of ePortfolios document, which can be found on the Applied GCE ICT section of Edexcel.com.

There were some centres that did not send candidate authentication sheets and these had to be chased by the moderator.

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.

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