Examiner's Report

January 2010

GCE Applied ICT 6962 Paper 01

Customising Applications

A PEARSON COMPANY

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Overall Comments

Important information

This specification has been updated and ALL candidates will be assessed on the updated version from SUMMER 2010. This version which has a blue cover and has been sent out to centres, many centres have attended the free inset sessions.

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.

Assessors must use the e-sheets as an opportunity to explain why they have awarded marks, there are two advantages to this for the centre. If the moderator can see why and where marks are awarded it is easier to agree with the centre marks, secondly if the centre marks cannot be agreed then the moderator can give better guidance to help future assessment.

A number of centres still do not meet deadlines for submitting work to the moderators; the deadlines are published in advance and must be kept unless special permission has been obtained in advance from Edexcel. Permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Centres who miss the deadline risk having the results delayed or the candidates recorded as absent.

Each unit must be on a separate CD, even if sent to the same moderator. Each unit will forwarded to different principal moderators for monitoring and auditing purposes.

Unit 12: Customising Applications (6962)

General Comments

There were very few entries for this unit in this window. Most centres submitted the sample required on one disk and included the e-record sheets and candidate authentication sheets all labelled according to the correct naming conventions as detailed in the document "Moderation of ePortfolios: Guidance for Centres". Many candidates' eportfolios were in the correct file formats, within the stated file size of 20 MB and most contained a clear index file which started the eportfolio. It was good to see many assessors giving clear feedback in the e-record sheets explaining the assessment decisions made and marks awarded. See the section on admin at the end of this report which details some poor practice relating to the submission of work for moderation.

In general Assessors were awarding marks generously for the evidence present in the portfolios with similar problematic areas.

At times the spirit of this unit does not seem to be recognised by Centres. The unit is intended to be a 'half way house' between creating a system using the in built wizards and/or macros and the full blown programming unit i.e. Unit 14. It is expected that the candidates will move beyond using wizards/macros and write their own code. It is expected it will include selection and iteration and a sequential search. In this moderation window there were very few centres who moved beyond wizards and/or code written by the candidates did not include selection and/or iteration.

Comments on Strand A

On the whole the evidence presented was suitable for the marks awarded though candidates tended to include screenshots of their final systems etc which is not required.

Comments on Strand B

It was disappointing to see that the same problems highlighted in other Principal Moderator reports are still occurring. This strand is all about the design of the system and not the final system A copy of the final code is not pseudo-code. Screenshots of the final system are not design. Whilst it is fine to have screenshots they should not be from the final system. Evidence of the functions requiring code to be written was limited on the whole. Where they were included the detail generally tended to be lacking. Evidence of prototyping was very limited. Prototyping should be detailed and related to the objectives of the system. Prototyping should include evidence of liaison with the client and of development of the product following feedback. The entire process should be fully documented. At times it appeared prototyping was an after thought. In this unit it is important that we see how the programming is going to be done. It would be difficult to gain the higher mark bands without some kind of structure diagram or process specs such as flowcharts or pseudo code. It would be difficult to gain the higher mark bands if these are not detailed.

Comments on Strand C

Most centres are providing projects which are suitable for A2; however there is evidence of candidates being placed in too high a mark band for the evidence present. Standard ways of working are important in this strand too. The programming code should include good use of indentation and comments clearly explaining the purpose of the code and it should clearly show where candidates have written/modified code to include at the very least iteration and selection moving to different types of selection, iteration and a sequential search to (for the highest mark band) amending information using a sequential search. At times moderators found it very hard to see what code had actually been written by the candidates and what had been generated using wizards etc. If a candidate has not written code themselves to cover selection and iteration then the product cannot be classed as A2 Level. The user and technical guide should also be taken into account here when awarding marks. A working version of the solution should be included with details of any passwords the moderators will need to view and test it.

Comments on Strand D

If the candidate has good measurable objectives in their specification this section is fairly easy. It only becomes complex if the program is not specified well. Evidence of some of the successful tests should be shown and for the higher mark bands there must be evidence of testing using a good range of data to test boundaries i.e. normal, out of range and illegal. Good evidence will specify what the test data is. There is no penalty if the program works perfectly.

Comments on Strand E

Evaluations are still weak. At A2 there are a significant number of marks for evaluation and many candidates are missing these. Again, a good functional specification with clear objectives and success criteria really makes a difference here. It is also worth noting that for mark band one there must be evidence of the candidates commenting on the **effectiveness of their OWN coding** and reaching some conclusion about **whether or not it was the best way to meet the requirements**. Mark band two requires **consideration of alternative solutions and the justification for the use of their OWN coding**. Mark band three requires **full justification for the use of their OWN coding**. Very few evaluations included evidence of any of this.

Grade Boundary January 2010

6962	Total	A	B	C	D	E
Raw Mark	60	44	38	32	27	22
UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40