Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Applied ICT (6960)
Paper 01 Using Multimedia Software

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General comments

Some students are stills producing web sites or similar products with very little in the way of a multimedia experience. This is not what the specification requires, although the product may be accessed via a browser, the main focus should be multimedia; combining videos, animations and sounds.

Centres are advised that students should be made aware of the e-portfolio size limits at the start of the project; this should therefore form part of the initial design and planning.

The specification contains sections on compression techniques, students are expected to use these to reduce the file size and complete the work within the limits. These limits should form part of the original functional specification.

When students exceed the limits this should be taken into consideration when assessing strandard ways of working for the unit.

These limits set a level playing field for all students as well as making the task demanding and challenging.

Strand (a)

The functional specification should describe the purpose of the product, the context and intended audience in sufficient detail most provided only brief comments. Better students explain what the finished product must do and how they would measure the success in terms of what the product will do when completed. They also referred to the multimedia in the product in terms of its purpose and function.

Students who had a "real" end user for the product find it easier to produce a detailed functional specification for the client. Students who combine unit 8 and 10 often produce a document common to both units and therefore do not include enough detail, or confuse project deadlines in unit 8 for success criteria in unit 10.

Some centres provided too much in the way of an assignment, which almost provides the function specification, in some cases all the students from the same centre produce similar products. This is not the best approach.

Strand (b)

This is the area which is often assessed leniently.

This is a multimedia product and it is essential that the multimedia elements feature prominently in the design. A storyboard for a video including scenes, timings and transitions would be a good example. Those who set out produce a web site often do not provide sufficient design

documentation for the multimedia. Often the only reference to a video is on a page layout indicating the position of a video.

For a multimedia product page design and layout forms only part of the design, to gain higher marks in this section the design must include more information and details about the multimedia elements.

The use of prototypes is another weak area few students involved others in evaluating them, or the prototypes consist of very basic changes to screen layout.

A working prototype is not required as this might be difficult within the size limits. However it should be possible to include some screen shots showing the development of the product. Again those who had real clients produced better work for this strand.

Strand (c)

The product should be capable of running largely standalone, and away from the development environment. This should be possible from within the eportfolio, from where the product should be launched for the purpose of assessment.

Better students ensured that the product met the functional specification, and delivered a product that was rich in multimedia elements. The multimedia was the main source of information with videos and animation being used to fulfil a definite purpose. Less able students simply included animations on a page of text with the animation serving little or no purpose on the page.

The multimedia product should contain some combination of video, sound, animation, and images. It is not necessary for all to be present, but a combination of at least two of these should be in a basic product. The product should be interactive in some way, allowing the user to control the experience to some extent, for example choosing from a selection of videos, or controlling a slide show.

Strand (d)

Students usually produced a test table; however this often only covered the basic navigation between pages and did cover items such as the functioning of an animation, or the timing of a video.

As well as the test table there should be some evidence of testing having taken place, this can be in the form of screenshots.

Students at the lower end of the mark range tended to produce little feedback from others, apart from in the prototyping stage of the project. Involvement of others was very poorly evidenced. The use of test users featured in some work however the evidence to support this was sometimes

weak, consisting of a questionnaire with little in the way of feedback against the functional specification.

Strand (e)

In order to achieve MB3 students need to produce well-rounded analytical and critical evaluations.

The evidence in this e-portfolio was often mixed with that for unit 8, it is important that the students are aware of the different requirements of the evaluation for this unit. This unit requires the product to be evaluated; unit 8 requires that the project management be evaluated.

Students who listed measurable success criteria in their function specification often did well in this section. The best approach is start with the success criteria and then analyse the extent to which these have been met. Feedback from others and if possible a real client helps students achieve higher marks.

Standard Ways of Working

In most cases the only evidence the external assessors require for this aspect was the file structures and names used by the students.

General Administration

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

Samples should be submitted with folders clearly labelled with centre numbers, student number and first 2 letters of surname and first of forename name. It would help if the erecord sheet naming convention is the same

[centre #]_[student #]_[first two letters of surname]_[first letter of forename].

A number of centres used formats that are not in the moderator tool kit for this unit, the product must be capable of running using only these file types. The tool kit is updated each year and centres are reminded of the need to check the contents before starting the unit, so that pupils are aware from the start of the requirements.

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