

Examiner's Report

January 2016

Pearson Edexcel

Level 1 Certificate/Diploma in
Digital Applications

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DA101 - Developing Web Products

Overall

DA101 is mandatory for both the Level 1 CiDA and DiDA qualifications. The only SPB available for this series was The Road to Fame, which required students to produce a three page website to promote a band. The entry for this series was 31.

Students generally produced a website that met most, if not all, of the requirements of the SPB and it was encouraging that the work submitted for moderation only included file types and formats accessible through the Digital Applications moderators' toolkit.

The evidence submitted by students was easy to access and all of the web pages were saved as .html files and so could be viewed through a web browser.

Strand (a) – Design a consistent page layout

While the majority of students produced planning evidence that showed the structure of their website and the layout of each page, only a minority of students annotated their plans appropriately to show design features such as colours, fonts and font size. Students' initial design work should be sufficiently detailed to illustrate each asset to be included, where it will be positioned, how it will look and, where appropriate, how it will function.

Further annotation to explain how the design of the web pages relates to the band's style of music and the target audience, supported the awarding of marks in the top mark band.

The second aspect of this assessment strand is the consistent application of page layout and design. Although colour schemes tended to remain consistent throughout the sites, other aspects of page layout and design often varied considerably from page to page, such as page size, the size and position of the banner and the navigation bar and fonts and font sizes.

Designing a suitable page layout and applying it consistently to each page in the site remains an area for improvement and students would benefit from spending more time planning an appropriate page layout and design, which they could then apply to each page in the site to ensure greater consistency in relation to the structure and appearance of each page across the site.

Strand (b) – Select, prepare and present content

Most sites submitted for moderation, included images of the band, an audio track and a list of dates and venues for future gigs. However, much of the content was not appropriate for the audience and purpose; for example, unappealing or unrelated images, low-resolution images and incomplete or unsuitable text were all common.

Students must also provide specific information about key aspects of the development process, such as resizing, cropping, converting and compressing assets. This information was most effectively communicated through annotated

screen shots but other appropriate formats include detailed information in the assets table and screen recordings.

Strand (c) – Create web pages using web-authoring software

Students were often over-rewarded for their ability to use web-authoring software to create web pages. In the best examples, text presentational techniques such as headings, bullets and emboldened text were used, sufficient assets were included on the pages and the page design helped to communicate the purpose of the site: to showcase the band and its style of music.

However, it was also common to see pages with very little content, images that had been distorted, blocks of text without any emphasis and a lack of balance between text and images. Students need to develop the ability to use web-authoring software in order to control the alignment of text and images, to resize images in proportion, to enhance text and images through appropriate presentation features and to manipulate colour if they are going to meet the assessment criteria for the top mark band in this strand.

Strand (d) – Produce a functional website

Most students submitted a fully functioning website with links between the three pages, a suitable email link and an audio track that played appropriately from within the site. Although students do not need to provide evidence of testing, appropriate testing clearly helps to highlight issues such as broken links, overlapping text and images and missing content.

The aspects of the brief that were least successfully fulfilled by students were the requirements to promote the band by showcasing the members of the band and their future gigs. Only a minority of students were able to meet these requirements successfully through the inclusion of suitable text and images that profiled the members of the band appropriately and provided sufficiently detailed information about the upcoming gigs, such as date, venue, ticket prices and time.

One area for development remains the design of the links, which were not always effective due to the choice of font, colour or graphic content.

Strand (e) – Review the website

In general, the reviews lacked reflective comments regarding strengths and weaknesses of the websites, effective responses to feedback from users and appropriate suggestions for future improvements, which was not always recognised in the marks awarded by the assessors.

Although there were some detailed reviews, it would appear that most students would benefit from further guidance on how to produce a review that contains meaningful comments about the functionality, usability and effectiveness of the final website in relation to the intended audience and purpose.

Grade Boundaries

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

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html?Qualification-Family=Digital-Applications>