

Examiners' Report June 2010

Principal Learning

Information Technology IT302 Understanding Organisations

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Contents

1.	Level 3 Unit 2 Report	1
2.	Statistics	3

Principal Examiner's Report

Principal Learning - Information Technology

Level 3 Unit 2 - Understanding Organisations

General comments

The performance of learners on this paper showed a significant shift in knowledge and understanding of the specification compared with the January paper. A major concern was that many learners did not appear to have taken the opportunity to use the pre-release in preparing for the examination with limited investigation into the topics that were highlighted in the pre-release.

There was however a significant decline in unanswered questions with most learners attempting all questions on the paper. There was also evidence of better time planning with most learners providing substantial answers to the final two extended writing questions.

Pre-Release

The pre-release introduced a fictional organisation 'Latons' that offered residential outdoor activity holidays to young people with physical and learning difficulties. It was made available on the Edexcel website approximately 6 weeks before the exam. Few learners showed a good understanding of the pre-release information and it was evident that some learners had not taken the opportunity to research topics in the pre-release such as 'not-for-profit' organisations, the role of a director, impact of different types of technology in an organisation and flow charts.

The purpose of the pre-release is to give learners a chance to familiarise themselves with the type of organisation they will be answering questions upon in the exam and to highlight areas of the specification where research could provide useful additional information to improve their answer.

Question 1

This question focused on the structure and management of 'Latons' and covered topics highlighted in the pre-release so it was especially disappointing that many learners had not investigated these topics to assist their answers especially in 1e where they were asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages to an organisation of outsourcing their IT provision.

Question 2

Most learners had a good understanding of flow charts and their application and there were some good answers on changes to the booking process as indicated by the flow charts. Unfortunately a few learners lost sight of the context of the scenario and provided inappropriate answers more applicable to a travel agency.

Question 3

This question explored interaction and integration between systems. Learners must take care to read questions carefully as many learners provided answers on data security for a question on data structure. The concept of internet protocols was poorly understood by many learners with many learners confusing this with viruses and data security.

Questions 4 and 6

These questions looked at success and risk factors in an organisation and it was pleasing to see an improvement in learners understanding of this area of the specification with many competent answers on return on investment and economic environment. The concept of profitability was however badly understood by many. There was a clear divide between learners who understood cashflow and those that did not.

The concluding section of question 6 showed that few learners had an understanding of how financial software supports an organisation.

Question 5

The question focused on customer relationship management and the use of IT to collect customer feedback, but learners appear not to have considered in their studies that an IT solution is not always the best solution for a small organisation.

Question 7

The first of the two extended writing questions was attempted by almost all learners but as on a previous paper showed poor knowledge and understanding of how technology can be introduced into an organisation to improve training needs. Most learners offered outline answers covering a variety of possible solutions but without any depth of detail that showed they had studied approaches, such as, video conferencing, e-learning and web based seminars in any depth. As a result most learners answers, although substantial in length remained insufficient in depth for higher marks.

Question 8

This question was marginally better than question 7 and produced some good, thoughtful answers on integrating technologies across an organisation with some considered recommendations. For many learners however, whether through lack of time or knowledge, only a superficial answer was provided.

2. STATISTICS

Level 3 Unit 2 - Understanding Organisations

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	77	68	59	50	42	34
Points score	21	18	15	12	9	6	3

Notes

Maximum Mark (raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the Mark Scheme or Marking Grids.

Raw boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a learner to qualify for a given grade.

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