

Examiners' Report

June 2016

Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills
ICT Level 2 (FST02)

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EXAMINER'S REPORT TO CENTRES ON FUNCTIONAL SKILLS ICT LEVEL 2 – JUNE 2016

Introduction

This paper was written to closely match the layout and the degree of difficulty of the previous series. Some centres had clearly worked hard prepare their candidates for the test. Unfortunately, there are still some centres that enter candidates who clearly lack the knowledge to access the higher marks. For example, some candidates could not use a correct =(V)LOOKUP function or =IF statement, both of which were required full marks for tasks 2c and 2d.

Centres should make sure that candidates' work is collated correctly before it is submitted to the examiner as many candidates did not hole punch the printouts correctly, some pages were upside down or back to front and they were frequently not in task number order or attached correctly to the cover sheet.

Centres should remind candidates to check that screenshots provided for Tasks 1 and 4 are of a sufficient size so that the information can be easily read.

There were five tasks to be completed by candidates; the background to which included finding information and producing an information sheet for a farm shop.

Task 1 - Internet Research

In Task 1 candidates were asked to search the internet to find an image of an alpaca. They were also asked to find the name of the emperor who used the bee as his emblem and the email address of the British Beekeeping Association. This task was generally well done and most candidates gained either 5 or 6 marks. A small number of candidates failed to include a relevant web address for the source of the image and included the Google or similar URL instead. Candidates should be aware that Google is a search engine and is, therefore, not appropriate when requested to enter the website address of the source of the information required in the test. Some candidates failed to select a single image from the gallery of images found.

Areas for improvement and development:

- understanding the need for a screen shot of search criteria
- producing screen shots in which the critical information is easy to read
- selecting and including a simple image from the search results.

Task 2 – Spreadsheet

In Task 2 candidates were presented with a spreadsheet which contained details of stock including re-order levels. Candidates were asked sort the table and identify the most popular product, then calculate the remaining stock for each product. They were then asked to use a spreadsheet function and information stored on the spreadsheet to enter the re-order levels for each product and then calculate whether stock should be re-ordered.

Candidates were then asked to format the spreadsheet so that it was clear and easy to read. Finally they were asked to produce a chart to display the remaining stock values for each product.

Most candidates sorted the data correctly and calculated the remaining stock but a significant number of candidates failed to use =(V)LOOKUP to enter the re-order levels and some did not use an =IF statement to calculate whether stock should be re-ordered. A small number of candidates did not include either of these functions.

A small number of candidates lost marks because they failed to apply any formatting techniques and some left columns truncated. The majority of candidates who did apply formatting made acceptable improvements to the spreadsheet. Although most candidates provided a formula view as requested, a significant number did not, which reduced the number of marks available for this task. In some cases marks were lost because a formula view was provided but the formulae were truncated.

Most candidates produced the specified chart from the required data range. The charts produced were generally fit for purpose but there are still a number of candidates who do not include a suitable title or correct axis labels.

Areas for improvement and development:

- using a =(V)LOOKUP function
- using the =IF function
- printing a formula view so that all formulae are visible
- adding a suitable title and axis labels to a chart
- printing a chart with an appropriate size and proportions, on a separate worksheet.

Task 3 – Presenting Information

Task 3 required candidates to produce an A4 newsletter, formatted in columns, for the farm shop. The newsletter was from Karen Crossland who runs the shop.

This task was well done by the majority of candidates who produced a newsletter that included relevant text and correctly formatted as columns. However, a small number of candidates failed to include all the text, especially the title and/or subheadings. A significant number included a paragraph about computer lessons which was clearly not relevant. Some candidates did not position images near the relevant text or check that images kept their proportions when inserted. Some candidates did not format the text in columns or used text boxes which often resulted in an unbalanced layout.

Almost all candidates selected the correct images including the image they found in Task 1(a). Most candidates removed the brackets as instructed and inserted the correct information from Task 1(b).

Candidates should be encourage to check the document in print preview prior to printing to make sure that it fits to one page and that the layout is appropriate for the required purpose of the document.

Areas for improvement and development:

- including all the relevant text
- using columns
- maintaining image proportions
- using appropriate image sizes
- considering a suitable layout of text and images
- checking a document for fitness for purpose.

Task 4 - Email

Candidates were asked to produce an email to Peter Crossland, the farm manager, with a copy of the spreadsheet attached. The majority of candidates successfully demonstrated the use of email software. Most candidates entered the correct e-mail address and subject heading.

Candidates were required to include a message asking Peter to re-order products where the remaining stock was low and the majority of candidates did this. However, as in previous series, a significant proportion of candidates lost marks by using inappropriate salutations such as 'Hi' or 'Hey' or 'text speak' in a business email. Almost all candidates successfully attached the correct file to the email.

Areas for improvement and development:

- adding a suitable message
- using a suitable business tone in the message.

Task 5 – Using ICT

For Task 5(a) candidates were given an image of an email received by Peter that stated that there was a parcel awaiting collection. The email asked for personal information to be provided. Candidates were told that Peter was not expecting any parcels and were asked to identify two items which suggested the email was not from a genuine parcel delivery firm. Most candidates gained full marks in this task, although a few gave the reason that Peter was not expecting any parcels.

Task 5(b) stated that Peter was asked to download a form in the email and asked candidates to identify two risks of downloading the form. All candidates gained at least one mark in this task but some lost marks by giving an answer such as 'hacking' which is not sufficiently specific.

Areas for improvement and development:

- checking the requirements of a task
- understanding the risks of downloading unfamiliar files from the internet.

Pass mark for FST02 in June 2016

Maximum mark	50
Pass mark	36
UMS mark	6



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