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Examiners' Report January 2011

GCSE ICT 5IT01 01

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Introduction

This is the first time that candidates have sat for examinations in the new GCSE in ICT. The new GCSE in ICT is different from the previous GCSE in a number of key areas.

The first area of difference is that all students now only sit a single untiered paper, rather than centres having to face the sometimes difficult choice of Foundation or Higher papers. To ensure that all candidates can access the paper, it has been specifically designed to increase in difficulty, so that easier questions are more prevalent at the start of the paper and that the paper becomes progressively more difficult. Efforts have also been made to make this paper accessible throughout, so that students of all ability ranges will find questions that are both challenging and interesting throughout the paper.

Another key area of difference is that the paper follows a scenario throughout, which should give students the ability to use ideas gleaned from earlier in the paper to answer later questions. Additionally, students will also find that 'command words' are used throughout the papers, which are consistently applied to indicate the type of response expected of them.

Finally, students will also find that some of the more difficult aspects of the previous specification, notably applying knowledge of applications, will now be tested entirely in Unit 2 in the controlled assessment.

Question 1(b)(i)

Almost all candidates answered this question correctly. The few candidates who failed to gain this mark had not read the question and instead volunteered "Camera A" as the most suitable.

Question 1(b)(ii)

Many candidates gave an incorrect response to this question. The majority of candidates who answered incorrectly tended to give an explanation of why an LCD screen was good, as opposed to the benefits of using one when recording.

(ii) Most of the camcorders have an LCD screen.

State **one** use for the screen.

(1)

To view photos you've just taken



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Examiner Comments

A correct response.

(ii) Most of the camcorders have an LCD screen.

State **one** use for the screen.

(1)

a clearer picture and better
resolution



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has tried to explain why an LCD is used, perhaps compared to the use of the viewfinder, rather than answering the question.

Question 1(b)(iii)

Most candidates gained the marks for this question, sensibly volunteering responses such as "SD card" or "memory card". The candidates that failed to gain the mark had seemingly not read the question and instead chose to volunteer one of the camcorders that had this feature i.e. "Camcorder A".

Question 1(b)(iv)

Most students made a correct attempt to identify the term 'WiFi' either giving a response relating to wireless connectivity or using the phrase 'wireless fidelity'. A number of candidates, whilst gaining the mark, did try to justify their response, which was unnecessary.

Many of the candidates who failed to gain this mark did not refer to the fact that it is a 'wireless' technology.

(iv) Some camcorders have WiFi.

State what is meant by WiFi.

(1)

Wifi is the use of wireless connection to certain devices such as the PC or the printer.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has successfully answered the question by using the phrase 'wireless technology', but has then gone on to explain where it might be used.

Whilst it is good to see this level of understanding, the candidate may be losing time which could be used elsewhere.



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Examiner Tip

Get students to understand the commonly used command words used throughout the paper. In this case 'state', which is looking for a short statement as an answer, often two or three word phrases.

Question 1(b)(v)

Most candidates gained marks by identifying either optical or digital zoom in their response. Some listed both in their answer, which was perfectly acceptable.

Question 1(b)(vi)

In almost all of the responses given, students showed a good understanding of why GPS is used. However, this question was frequently answered incorrectly by students as they gave answers that gave the most common use of GPS (in SAT NAV devices), rather than answering the question asked of them.

(vi) Camcorder D has GPS tagging as an extra feature.

State what GPS tagging does.

(1)
It can ~~pinpoint~~ identify an exact location of the picture; giving its exact geographical coordinates.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has given a clear answer that shows good understanding of what GPS tagging does.

Question 1(b)(vii)

Those that answered question 1(b)(vi) correctly tended to gain this mark, giving responses related to finding where images were taken.

In some cases where students did not gain the mark, it was in the belief that 'tagging' may be used to locate/retrieve a lost item - in this case the camcorder.

(vii) State why GPS tagging is a useful feature.

(1)

GPS tagging is useful because the camcorder can be located.



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Examiner Comments

The student shows awareness of one of the potential uses of GPS but has misunderstood the question.

(vii) State why GPS tagging is a useful feature.

(1)

If you want to return to a location where you took previous pictures and video the GPS tagging helps you find it.



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Examiner Comments

The student has shown wider awareness of the use of GPS and the term 'GPS tagging', in this case understanding that this feature allows users to reference previously taken images by their location.

Question 1(c)(ii)

A number of students did not gain the mark for this question, which was simply that DVDs have a larger storage capacity.

The main reason for this is that students had missed that the question discussed the use of CD and DVD as 'backup', rather than as a means to view the footage. Many students also did not seem to be aware that both DVDs and CDs can store any type of file.

(ii) Mitch could use DVD or CD to backup his video files.

State **one** reason why DVD is more suitable.

(1)

because on CD its more for listening to music and DVD are
for videos



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Examiner Comments

This student made a mistake which was common, explaining that CDs are for music and DVDs are for video.



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Examiner Tip

Students need to have a wide awareness of the different uses of media that will enable them to correctly answer the question.

Question 1(c)(iii)

A significant number of candidates either failed to read the question or did not understand the term 'local' and produced answers relating to online storage.

(iii) Identify **one local** storage device, other than a DVD or CD drive, that could be used for backups.

(1)

online backup



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Examiner Comments

A common incorrect response.



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Examiner Tip

Students need to have an awareness of commonly used terms such as 'local' when referring to devices, particularly due to the increasing use of online applications and utilities.

Question 1(c)(iv)

Most students gained at least one mark for this question, showing an awareness of online storage and its benefits. Unfortunately, many students failed to gain the second mark due to repeating themselves in their responses.

(iv) Mitch could use online storage for his video files.

Give **two** advantages of using online storage rather than DVD.

(2)

- 1 If Mitch loses his DVD, he has lost his backed up files, whereas online you cannot physically lose the backed up files.
- 2 Mitch can access his backed up files anywhere that has an internet connection, but ~~you~~ Mitch must carry the DVD if he wishes to use his backed up files elsewhere.



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Examiner Comments

This student has provided two excellent *different* responses that are both clear advantages to a user of online storage.

(iv) Mitch could use online storage for his video files.

Give **two** advantages of using online storage rather than DVD.

(2)

1. It is stored on a secure remote server.

2. If he loses the DVD he has lost his backup. You can't lose internet storage.



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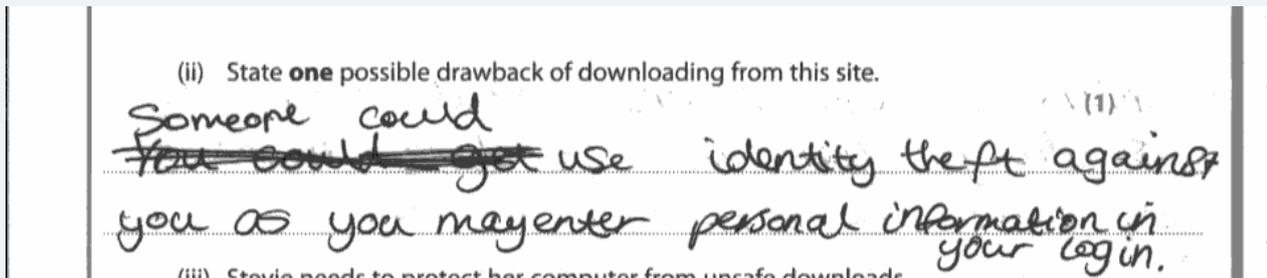
Examiner Comments

Whilst this student has given two good answers and shows good awareness, the responses are too similar in nature, in that they both relate to the fact that the files are more secure or less likely to be lost or damaged.

Question 2(a)(ii)

Most students gave correct responses, often suggesting that the download may carry a virus or be of poor quality.

A small number of students showed very good awareness, proposing that personal data may be misused if the user was asked to log in or register before downloading.



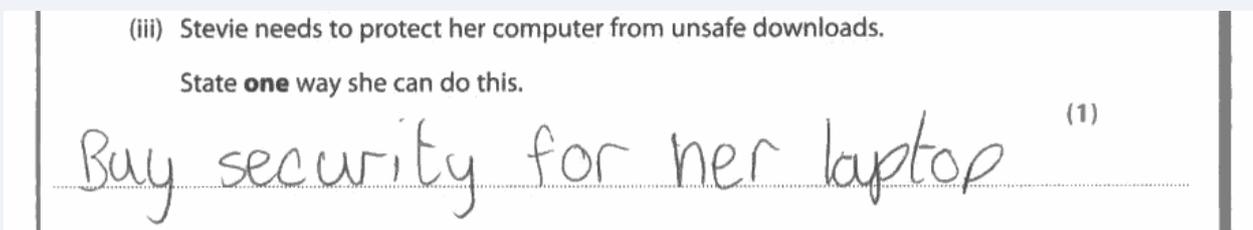
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Examiner Comments

This student has shown very good awareness of the potential dangers of 'file sharing' sites and given a response that was uncommon, but obviously correct.

Question 2(a)(iii)

Most students gained the mark for this question. However, a number did not, being too vague in their responses.



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Examiner Comments

The student has been too vague in their response here and should have been looking to give an answer such as 'turn on the firewall' or 'get a firewall'.

(iii) Stevie needs to protect her computer from unsafe downloads.

State **one** way she can do this.

(1)

(legal)
only download from well known websites
such as for music would be iTunes



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Examiner Comments

A correct response.

Question 2(b)(ii)

A surprising number of students did not gain the mark for this question, which was simply looking for a response involving the suggestion of 'https:' in the address bar or other similar response.

A number of students did not gain the mark as they suggested the padlock symbol, despite the stem asking for 'one other way...'. The padlock symbol had already been given to candidates as part of question 2 (b).

(ii) State **one** other way that browsers display security information.

(1)

They have 'https' rather than 'http' at the start
of the URL.



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Examiner Comments

A correct response.

Question 2(c)(i)

Many students did well on this question, gaining at least one of the marks and showing good awareness of forums and why they are used.

Where students did not gain the mark, they tended to suggest that a forum would be used as a means to store and backup files.

(c) Stevie produces her own music tracks. She uploads her music to a forum site.

(i) Give **two** reasons for doing this.

(2)

- 1 So that she can share her tracks with other online users.
- 2 To get opinions and reviews on her ^{music tracks} ~~music tracks~~ to see what the public think of them.



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Examiner Comments

This student has shown good awareness of forums and their potential uses, giving two correct reasons for their use.

(c) Stevie produces her own music tracks. She uploads her music to a forum site.

(i) Give **two** reasons for doing this.

(2)

- 1 Because it is a safe place to keep her music.
- 2 It will save space on her computer and she will be able to access it from other computers.



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Examiner Comments

This student has not gained any marks here, either due to lack of awareness of forums or confusing them with online storage.

Question 2(c)(ii)

Students, in general, scored well on this question, gaining one or both of the available marks. Where they failed to gain both marks, this was often due to repeating themselves or using a very similar response twice.

Question 2(c)(iii)

The majority of candidates scored high marks on this question, showing good awareness of how to keep a password secure and also being able to differentiate between what makes a good password (question 2(c)(ii)) and how to keep them secure.

Question 2(d)(ii)

The quality of responses throughout this question would suggest that whilst students seem aware that privacy is an issue with online sites, they are unaware that sites that store information online have a requirement to keep data securely and also let users know how information will be used.

Most of the students who answered incorrectly tended to give answers related to privacy settings on social networking sites.

Explain the purpose of a privacy policy.

(2)

It shows what the website does to make sure your information is kept safe due to the Data protection act 1998, websites should keep data secure.



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Examiner Comments

This student has shown excellent awareness of privacy policies, explaining the need to keep data secure and also the link to the Data Protection Act.



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Examiner Tip

This could be taught alongside/with other issues from Topic 6 to show where the Data Protection Act is being applied.

Question 3(a)(ii)

On the whole this question was not answered well and only a few students gained the marks. Most students tended to regurgitate the wording of the question or explain the term 'unlimited', showing little awareness of what 'unlimited' actually meant in terms of internet usage.

(ii) **BB Broadband** offers 'unlimited' monthly usage.

State what this means.

(1)

Unlimited means you can use as many or as much of a specific thing as you want. It will never run out.



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Examiner Comments

A very common response. The student has simply explained the term 'unlimited' without any reference to the item in question - internet usage.

(ii) **BB Broadband** offers 'unlimited' monthly usage.

State what this means.

(1)

That there is no download limit per month.



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Examiner Comments

This student has correctly answered the question and used the required terminology - 'download'.



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Examiner Tip

Students should be 'savvy' users of ICT and be able to define items such as this.

Question 3(a)(iii)

This was generally a well-answered question, with many candidates gaining one or both marks.

State **one** benefit and **one** limitation of mobile broadband. (2)

Benefit
It can be used almost anywhere with a connection.

Limitation
The signal strength can be affected by location.

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Examiner Comments

This student has gained both marks here for showing very good awareness of the benefits and limitations of this technology.

Students who did not gain the marks tended to state things such as 'you can get internet anywhere on your phone' which could not be credited.

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Examiner Tip

Students need to know the difference between 'mobile broadband' and broadband available on a mobile phone.

Question 3(b)(ii)

A majority of students gained one mark or more on this question. Many of them identified that users could access the internet from anywhere inside/outside the house within range.

Students failed to gain the mark where they had simply suggested 'no wires' without justification and also where they had incorrectly indicated that many users could access the same internet connection, which is not solely available through wireless technology.

(ii) Give **two** reasons for having a wireless home network.

- 1 you can use the wireless whenever ⁽²⁾ you are around the house.
- 2 If there are a lot of people/devices using wireless home network it is an advantage as many people can use internet at the same time.

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Examiner Comments

This student has gained the first but not the second mark. The second mark is not awarded as wired technologies also allow multiple users to access the same connection and therefore it is not a reason to install or switch to a wireless connection.

Question 3(b)(iii)

The vast majority of candidates gained at least one mark, with more than half of them gaining two or three of the available marks.

Most of those who gained the marks tended to identify the strength of the signal and that the networks that were secure would require a password.

Question 3(c)(iii)

Many students showed a good understanding of how the internet could be used to improve or enhance someone's life, in this case a family. Most students suggested two or three good points.

Where students failed to gain the marks was in failing to explain their points and showing a lack of awareness of the 'command word' being used.

(iii) Explain how having access to the internet could enhance the family's daily lives.

(3)

Having access to internet ~~could~~ can enhance the family's daily lives in many ways. ~~The family~~ They could use the internet to help with learning & schoolwork because ^{the internet} it gives you access to ^{countless} various types of information. They could use the internet to teach themselves by using sites such as BBC bitesize. The family could also use the internet to shop online & make payments online, this is more ~~easy~~ convenient than going to the shops. It also allows them to compare prices online. The family could also use the internet to socialise and research for travel arrangements (e.g. booking holidays). Socialising online allows them to keep in touch with distant relatives and friends regularly.

(Total for Question 3 = 16 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This student has given a range of suggestions, explaining each one and, therefore, gaining all of the available marks.



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Examiner Tip

Discuss the 'command words' and how they are used in the paper. In this case 'Explain' is looking for a point with explanation.

Question 3(c)(i)-(ii)

A surprisingly large number of students failed to gain any marks for this question.

The main reason for this was the lack of awareness of the difference between 'open source' and 'online applications'. This could be attributed to a simple lack of awareness of the differences between the two or a lack of coverage in the learning.

(c) Lee recommends that open source software is installed on the laptops.

(i) Give **two** advantages of open source software over proprietary software.

(2)

1 The source code is available for editing, so if they can, they can customise it.

2 It is free and people can submit their version of the software which might be better than the original.

(ii) Give **one** disadvantage of open source software over proprietary software.

(1)

Since lots of money has not gone into making it, it will be less professional, may contain mistakes and may be ~~more~~ ~~more~~ harder to understand by the user.

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Examiner Comments

This student has clearly covered this area of the specification and shows excellent understanding of open source software.

Many students who had given incorrect responses tended to state 'frees up storage space' or 'not available when internet is down' which are both advantages/disadvantages of **online applications**.

Question 4(a)(i)

The majority of students were successful in this question, most gaining one or more marks for correctly identifying that stores can now access a wider audience, have lower operating costs and be open for longer.

Where students did not gain marks it was often due to misreading the question and answering from the point of the view of the customer as opposed to the stores.

Question 4(a)(ii)

In general, students did not score well on this questions. Most gave answers too vague to gain credit, since they did not focused on auction websites.

(ii) Stevie sometimes bids for goods on auction sites.

Describe **two** features of an online auction.

(4)

1. Fast and simple payment methods e.g. paypal which ensures safety and is very simple easy to use.
2. Feedback, people can leave feedback of the ~~supplier~~ Supplier and the reliability from there purchase ~~that help~~ which will help new buyers.



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Examiner Comments

The student has provided two responses which give and describe two features of online auctions.

Question 4(b)(i)

A surprisingly large amount of students failed to get the mark for this question, due to not reading the question and providing answers such as 'cash on delivery' or 'cheque'.

Most students who correctly answered this question suggested answers such as 'paypal' or less commonly 'e-cheques' or 'online gift vouchers'.

- (b) (i) Stevie buys some T-shirts from an online store.
She is worried about entering her card details online.
State **one** other way she could pay online.

(1)

by cheque



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Examiner Comments

This student has simply not read the question and provided a response that is not available as an online payment method.



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Examiner Tip

Students will improve in these 'one other way...' questions through attempting and looking at similar questions in order to reinforce the need to read the question.

- (b) (i) Stevie buys some T-shirts from an online store.
She is worried about entering her card details online.
State **one** other way she could pay online.

(1)

Via a third party site like PayPal.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has provided a well worded response.

Question 4(b)(ii)

Students made a good attempt at the question and the vast majority gained at least one mark for identifying the fact that a refund would be available.

Many students also showed excellent knowledge, gaining both marks through an awareness of the 7 day rule (consumer protection (distance selling) regulations) in relation to online transactions.

Question 4(b)(iii)

The vast majority of students gained this mark, correctly identifying the ability to add comments to review sites or blogs, etc.

Question 4(c)(i)

A few students gained one or two marks, usually through the knowledge of tracking cookies being used based upon web searches etc.

Unfortunately, most students either did not know the answer to this question or again misread the question on 'online targeted marketing', often suggesting that companies might send an advertising email to individuals.

(c) (i) Many websites use online targeted marketing.

Describe **one** method that companies use to target online marketing at individuals.

(2)

By looking through your cookies and seeing your most viewed browsing data. They then use this to advertise products you have searched for, or you may like.



This student has identified that cookies are used in the process and that companies can then use these to target adverts based upon previous searches.

Describe **one** method that companies use to target online marketing at individuals.

(2)

if a business was targeting younger people they would draw them in with a colourful internet advertisement on website like youtube or other younger generation websites.



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Examiner Comments

This student has misread or not understood the question and has discussed how companies might target adverts to individuals when on a site which is already aimed at their age group.

Question 4(c)(ii)

The quality of responses in this questions showed that students have a very good awareness of the benefits and drawbacks of online shopping. However, students did not necessarily provide responses that were considered discussions of benefits and drawbacks and, therefore, few attained level 3.

These 6 mark questions now require a much more discursive response, expecting students to give and then explain the benefits and drawbacks, rather than simply produce coherent lists of benefits and drawbacks. Students are also assessed on quality of written communication in these questions.

*(ii) Many people shop online.

Discuss the benefits and drawbacks to the **customer** of shopping online.

(6)

There can be many benefits to shopping online one of them is that it is available 24/7 and 7 days a week so ^{you} can order goods ~~at~~ any time. Also there are much bigger ranges of goods online from a variety of shops, so it ~~is~~ can also be easier to compare the items and their prices. Another reason is that you don't even have to leave the house to buy any of your items. However there can be drawbacks such as having to give your card details over, this can make it much easier for people to steal your money through phishing, identity theft, hacking ect. Some times there may just be too much information and items so can make it extremely hard to choose your item. There can also be the problem with spam, when companies have sold your details to other companies and you may get emails sent to you offering products, which can become annoying.



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Examiner Comments

This student has given a well balanced range of benefits and drawbacks of shopping online, attempting to justify each point made.

This student has not gained full marks since they have made a number of spelling mistakes and errors in grammar and the response is not as well organised as it could be.

*(ii) Many people shop online.

Discuss the benefits and drawbacks to the customer of shopping online.

(6)

Benefits:

- website is on 24 hours a day.
- You get a chance to see a range of varieties.
- could possibly be cheaper.
- If you can't carry an item, or if there isn't any space in your vehicle, it'll be better to buy it online.

Drawbacks:

- It could increase a chance of identity theft.
- You have to pay extra for ~~the~~ delivery.
- ~~you have to wait longer for it to arrive.~~
- You have to wait longer for it to arrive.



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Examiner Comments

This student has identified some benefits and drawbacks and has sensibly structured them into the relevant categories.

However, the suggested benefits/drawbacks are not really explained in any detail.



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Examiner Tip

Students should be looking to justify points made such as “website is on 24 hours a day, so customers who work late can still go shopping where otherwise they may not have the time.”

Question 5(a)(i)

The majority of students gained the mark on this question.

Question 5(a)(ii)

Most students attempted this question, but a surprisingly large number failed to gain any marks. Of the students who correctly answered this, most gave responses about being easy to set up, portability and the fact that they are designed for gaming.

Many candidates who got this wrong seemed to misunderstand the question, often giving suggestions about games improving hand-eye coordination or other skills.

(ii) Mitch thinks that games consoles are better than PCs for gaming.

State **two** advantages of using consoles, rather than PCs, for gaming.

(2)

1 Easy to set up, play straight away after unboxing.

2 Consoles are specially designed to support gaming.



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Examiner Comments

This student has shown good awareness, comparing consoles directly with PCs for the stated use and suggesting two perfectly valid responses.

Question 5(a)(iii)

Most students were able to gain marks on this question, a large number gaining both available marks.

Where students only gained one mark for this, it was often due to repeating themselves and giving two similar responses, rather than identifying two *different* uses. Some students failed to read the question and suggested different kinds of games.

(iii) Modern games consoles are multi-functional devices.
Apart from gaming, give **two** other uses for games consoles. (2)

1. Streaming videos or music

2. Accessing the internet

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Examiner Comments

This student has suggested two *different* uses for consoles.

Question 5(b)

Many candidates gained one or two marks for this question but a large number failed to gain the second mark due to a lack of explanation of the point suggested.

Question 5(c)(i)

This question was answered correctly by the overwhelming majority of students. Students who did not get the mark tended to 'shoot themselves in the foot', offering contradictory responses.

(c) Mitch asks Lee to copy a game for him.
(i) State why Lee must not do this. (1)

~~#~~ because copy right is illegal

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Examiner Comments

The student has not gained the mark because their explanation is confused. They could have gained the mark by stating simply: "because of copyright" or "it is illegal to copy copyrighted material".

Question 5(c)(ii)

Many students failed to gain the marks for this question.

Many did not answer from the point of view of the company and some simply did not justify their responses.

(ii) Many gaming companies allow users to download games straight to their console.

Give **one** advantage to the company of allowing this.

(1)

It is cheaper for the company to make as they don't have to spend money on disks and boxes.



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Examiner Comments

The student has identified that it is cheaper and has stated why.

(ii) Many gaming companies allow users to download games straight to their console.

Give **one** advantage to the company of allowing this.

(1)

they make ^{more} money



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Examiner Comments

The student does not gain the mark as they have not identified why the company is making more money.

Question 5(c)(iii)

The quality of responses for this question showed that students have a good awareness of environmental issues.

Many candidates gained at least one mark, only failing to gain two, because they did not go on and explain the benefit they identified.

(iii) Explain **one** environmental benefit of downloading games rather than buying them on disk.

(2)

When the game brakes you could bin it
and it would go to a land fill
site -! Plastic is not Bio Degradable
and will not Rot away?



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Examiner Comments

The student has given the benefit - that the game may be disposed of eventually (less waste), and has explained this benefit - the lack of need for landfill.

Question 5(d)

A significant number of students managed to gain more than half of the marks, showing a good knowledge and awareness of the impact of digital devices.

However, as with question 4(c)(ii), few candidates achieved level 3 as the responses were rather simplistic in that points were made without any real justification or explanation. Also, in this question a large number of students gave very one-sided and rather negative responses, not discussing at all at the positive benefits of digital devices.

*(d) Discuss how the use of digital devices can impact on people's health and wellbeing.

(6)

Many digital devices can affect people's health and well
being in many different ways, firstly it can affect their
eye sight's example there are a few digital devices which
have high resolution in which the brightness of the screen

may be too bright therefore their eyesight can be affected. The second way it can affect their health is that most digital devices can cause migraines and headaches which occurs due to the consumer using the product too often. Another way it can affect people is that it may distract ones life and keep them more into the virtual world rather than the social world. Some people may find it hard to use digital devices e.g elderly people may find it hard to use mobile phones either because they cannot see the screen properly or they find it hard using the product. Some people may feel that there are many digital devices they have which can get them into having a more technology filled world and they may live their life in a more virtual world than a real world.



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Examiner Comments

This student response, whilst well structured, and with some well-made points, focuses only on the negative. To achieve level 3 candidates need to present a balanced discussion of positive as well as negative issues. Additionally, whilst the student has tried to justify most of their points, some of these justifications are not actually valid.



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Examiner Tip

Unless a question specifically asks them to, students should be looking to give a **balanced** discussion of positive and negative aspects of the topic tested. Students should provide justification for points that they have made.

Despite the fact that this was the first assessment series, the majority of students gave thoughtful and mature responses to most of the questions asked. This is particularly encouraging since candidates have only been studying this new course since September.

Students showed good knowledge of the key concepts and showed that the ethos of this qualification, to develop 'tech savvy' users, seems to have been embraced by the centres. Students showed excellent awareness of available and new technologies and their potential uses, online environments including the goods and services available and also the underlying issues. There were some examples of very high levels of awareness and understanding displayed in the responses seen.

Students need to develop their awareness of the required level of response to the command word used. Also, despite almost all candidates displaying excellent knowledge, their ability to identify exactly what is being asked of them in the question does need to be addressed. As a result, a number of candidates failed to gain marks by not reading or responding accurately to the question that was being asked of them.

Finally, despite showing wide-ranging awareness of the issues involved, students need to develop a more discussion-based approach to answering the 'essay-style' questions that appear in questions 4 and 5.

Grade Boundaries

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