

Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Information and Communication
Technology (5IT03)

Paper 1: Exploring Digital Design

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2018

Publications Code 5IT03_01_1806_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2018

Introduction

This unit was first examined in January 2012 and forms part of the double award GCSE ICT qualification. This is the final examination for this unit with the GCSE in ICT reaching the end of its qualification life in summer 2018.

This paper follows a non-tiered structure which allows all students to access all grades. To this end, the paper is designed to gradually increase in difficulty with a greater percentage of higher grade components in the later questions.

The examination is designed to test the students' ability to apply knowledge of digital design within a given context. The scenario is provided at the start of the paper which runs throughout the examination, with additional information provided with individual questions as required. Many questions are supported by a range stimulus materials related to a particular assessment focus and aspect of the scenario

It is vital that students make appropriate use of knowledge specific products and audiences, as well as an understanding of general design principles, if they are to attain the highest marks. More successful students apply their understanding to the provided context rather than producing generic, unfocused answers.

Due to this being the final offering of this examination, the number of entries was significantly lower than previous series. However students' performance showed significant improvement compared with performance in the June 2017 assessment window.

Where performance was not as successful, students did not appear aware of the requirements of particular command verbs; not showing an understanding, for example, that an explain question should contain two linked points, would greatly improve candidate performance.

Question 1

Q1(a)

Performance on this question was generally as expected with most students able to provide at least one way in which the example prototype could be made more suitable for use on a mobile device. Where students were less successful, responses tended to be too general and suggestions focused on general improvements and not on the appropriateness for the target device.

Q1(c)(i)

The majority of students were able to provide a suitable benefit of streaming videos rather than downloading them. The fact that streaming a video does not use up local storage was the most common answer given; responses for this question were usually clear and concise.

Q1(c)(ii)

The majority of students were able to provide a suitable benefit of downloading videos rather than streaming them. Where students were less successful, responses tended to be too vague. For example, many answers stated 'does not require internet'. In these cases students did not make a clear enough distinction that streaming requires an active connection every time the video is watched or that downloading can be watched offline once it has been downloaded. Both would require an internet connection at some point.

Q1(b)

The majority of students were able to gain one out of the two mark available, typically for answers focusing gaining feedback early on in the development of a product. However, very few students demonstrated broader knowledge of this area of the specification with very few able to provide a second suitable reason.

Q1(e)(i)

Performance on this question was generally very good with the majority of students able to provide two design features that are included in a house style. Where performance was not as good, this was typically due to misinterpretation of the question, focusing ways of applying house style rather than its content.

Q1(e)(ii)

Students showed a good understanding of repurposing with the majority of students gaining marks and a significant number able to provide two changes that might be made to images as they are repurposed.

Question 2

Q2(a)(i)

Students were, on the whole, able to provide at least one improvement to the layout of the given text. Surprisingly few, however, students were able to provide a second way in which it could be improved. Where student responses did not meet the demands of the question, this was typically due to general / unfocused suggestions that were not specifically about layout as required in the question.

Q2(a)(iii)

Performance on this question was lower than anticipated with many students not providing suitable responses to gain credit. Where students did provide credit worthy answers there were typically single isolated points, which gained one out of the two marks available. Responses typically did not provide a suitable expansion or reason to meet the demands of an 'explain' question. Centres are encouraged to work with students on developing examination technique for these style of questions.

Q2(b)(i)

Response on this question was as expected and showed a spread of answers across the ability range of the students. Most students were able to gain at least one mark here with the more able students providing more detailed responses. Where student responses did not gain many marks, this was typified by answers that stated every stage of the flowchart rather than providing a description of the overall purpose of the process represented in the flowchart.

Q2(b)(ii)

Overall, students showed a good understanding of how data is processed in a flow chart representation with most students able to gain three or four marks by providing the correct outputs generated by the system.

Q2(c)

The majority of students provided responses that only accessed one out of a possible two marks for this question. Typically students were able to provide a reason for compressing images but were often unable to provide suitable expansion to their response. Many responses were too general and did not focus on the purpose of the compression (emailing the e-zine).

Question 3

Q3(a)

Performance on this question was generally very good. The vast majority of students were able to gain at least three marks out of a possible five, with many gaining four or five. Generally, designs showed significant improvement to similar style question in previous series. Designs on the whole were much clearer and annotations informative.

Q3(b)(i)

Performance on this question was good with most learners able to provide answers worthy of some credit and a pleasing number achieving full marks. Typically students were able to identify a suitable tool that could be used, most commonly the 'magic wand', with many providing suitable descriptions of the process involved in removing the background.

Q3(b)(ii)

Most earners were able to provide a suitable reason as to why the TIFF file may cause problems when used in a website. However, as with other explain questions in the paper, most students were unable to provide a suitable linked response. As such most students gained only one out of a possible two marks.

Q3(c)

The overall performance on this question was poor with very few students showing sufficient understating of 'rule of thirds' to gain marks.

Q3(d)

The majority of students were able to provide at least one suitable reason for the use of versioning. Typically, reasons provided focused on identifying the most recent / up-to-date file. However, very few students were able to provide an appropriate second reason.

Q3(e)

The majority of students were able to identify one way in which user experience could be impacted by the use of sound in the banner. However, as with other questions in the paper where linked responses were required, few students were able to provide appropriate linked expansions. As such, students typically gained only one mark out of a possible two.

Question 4

Q4(a)(ii)

Performance on this question was quite disappointing with surprisingly few students providing suitable responses to gain credit. The most common incorrect response focused on the use of copy / paste rather than the use of templates (or similar).

Q4(a)(iii)

Performance on this question was very pleasing with all students able to achieve at least one mark out of a possible two. Where students were not able to gain a second mark this was generally due to not making clear enough distinction between the two reasons given; focusing on just being difficult to read rather than the characteristics of the font that make it difficult to read.

Q4(b)

Student performance on this question was generally quite good with most being able to provide responses appropriate to gain at least one mark with many gaining two, out of a possible three. Most commonly students identified adding a translation feature as an improvement that could be made.

Q4(c)

Student performance on this question was generally quite good with most students able to provide responses appropriate to gain at least one mark with many gaining two, out of a possible three. Most students were able to identify a method of data collection and many were able to provide a linked point describing how that method could be used. Few students were able to provide an additional stage in the process to gain all three marks.

Q4(d)

Most students were able to gain at least one mark for identifying a suitable way in which a mobile version of a site would differ from the desktop version. As with other explain questions, however, student responses often did not provide a suitable, linked, expansion as such, and did not access both marks available.

Q4(e)

The extended questions are an opportunity for students to demonstrate deeper understanding of a particular area of the specification. Targeted at C grade and above marks, the extended questions require students to provide linked changes of reasoning that are supported by examples that are appropriate to the given scenario.

Generally, students demonstrated only superficial understanding of the content being tested. Answers typically identified some ways that accessibility features would help support users of a website. However, responses often relied on simple statements which focused on defining different accessibility features rather than careful analysis of how these features support individual, and groups of, users. As a result, answers were usually limited to mark bands 1 and 2 with few Mark Band 3 responses seen.

Question 5

Q5(a)(i)

This question was generally well answered by students with the majority of able to identify a method of ensuring data was more valid, most typically a drop-down menu. Many students were able to provide some expansion in order to achieve two marks out of a possible three. However, few students were able to provide a fully linked description. As such, only a small number of students achieved a full three marks for this question.

Q5(a)(ii)

Student performance on this question was very good with the vast majority of students able to provide at least one valid design feature. Many of the students these students were also able to provide a second features and gained full marks on this question.

Q5(b)

This question was targeted at the very highest grades (A-A*), therefore, as expected many students did not perform well on this question. For those that did gain credit here, students tended to score only one or two marks. As with other 'describe' style questions, students often demonstrated understanding in isolation and did not provide suitable developments of points that they made.

Q5(c)

As with Q5(b), this question was targeted at the higher end of the grade spectrum, and performed in a very similar manner. As with previous 'explain' questions, where students did gain credit typically did not provide suitable

expansion or justification of points made. As a result, one mark out of three was most typical with very few gaining two or three marks.

Q5(d)

As previously stated in this report, the extended questions are an opportunity for students to demonstrate deeper understanding of a particular area of the specification. Targeted at C grade and above, the extended questions require students to provide linked chains of reasoning that are supported by examples that are appropriate to the given scenario.

Performance on this extended question was similar to the performance in Q4(e), with few students accessing the top mark band. The performance on the question demonstrated only superficial understanding of the impact of layout on the usability of a site. Many students did not focus appropriately on layout and discussed other design features (e.g. colour, content etc) as a result, these students demonstrated only limited understanding. Answers typically were able to identify some issues to do with layout but often these were not suitably linked to usability or the success of the store.

Paper Summary

Based on performance of this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Develop critical review skills by exploring a range of professionally and non-professionally produced digital products. Consider how high quality products address audience requirements and use these ideas as a way of evaluating other products.
- Practice giving specific, written feedback on how products can be improved.
- Ensure responses are contextual and appropriate to the given situation and stimulus material.
- Develop the skill of understanding the requirements of particular command, so that you are aware of how your response to a question should be structured.
- In extended writing questions, ensure that when a point is made that it is expanded and, where appropriate, supported by an example.
- Explore the purpose and use of a range of different documents used when designing digital products and practice using these in response to given scenarios.

