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Examiners' Report

November 2009

IGCSE

IGCSE ICT(4385) Paper 2H

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General Comments

The entry for this paper was quite small only amounting to 52 candidates. Some good responses were seen from centres but because of the low entry it was difficult to see trends emerging.

Feedback on Candidate Responses

Q1(a)
Reasonable answers were given by the better candidates scoring six of the nine marks available. Weaker candidates could identify the type of data held but where unable to suggest suitable field lengths and suggest a suitable reason for their choice

Q1(b)
Well scored by the stronger candidates who were fully conversant with validation testing

Q2(a)
Poorly scored by most candidates. It appeared that candidates were not able to make suitable comparisons between the given storage methods. Wrong answers given were similar to the following response-
'It is rewritable and easy to apply to a camera….'.The other devices listed were also rewritable.

Q2(b)
Good answers given by most candidates.

Q3(a)
Most candidates gained full marks here. Health & Safety features applied to ICT systems had been taught well

Q3(b)
Good answers were seen here from the stronger candidates. Weaker candidates did not understand how working conditions can affect a computer operator physically

Q4(a)
Most candidates gained two of the available three marks related to the differences between WAN and LAN networks

Q4(b)(i)
Most gained four out of the six available marks. Weaker candidates failed to realise a large screen would be required for a video conferencing situation.

Q4b(ii)
Poor answers from most candidates. Software requirements for video conferencing was a weak area.

Q5
Generally poorly scored. The examiners were looking for answers related to finding information on the internet. eg 'too much information is downloaded', or 'out of date information being found'. Candidates were more concerned with the possibility of hacking occurring. This was not the context of the question.

Q6(a)(i)
Most candidates gained one of the available two marks - mostly for explaining what a strong password was. Only the stronger candidates gave an example of a strong password for the second mark

Q6(a)(ii)
Mostly only one of the available two marks was usually scored. This was because candidates failed to expand on any answers given.

Q6(b)
Most candidates could only give one problem associated with the use of strong passwords – usually 'easy to forget it' many candidates often repeated the same problem from a different angle and therefore did not score the additional mark available.

Q7 (a)
The stronger candidates gave two valid benefits to using networked computers-usually related to messaging or sharing resources. Few mentioned central backups, ease of software installation etc.

Q7(b)
Poor answers here. A surprising number of candidates thought a virus could be transferred from pc to pc around the network.

Q8(a)(i)
Only the strongest candidates scored well here. Weaker candidates suggested using a modem. This device would not be fast enough for internet gaming as broadband speeds would be required

Q8(a)(ii)
Good answers given by most candidates relating to the use of on-screen controls

Q8(a)(iii)
Most candidates scored one of the available two marks for a DVD Rom drive. Few gained the second mark for stating the fact that the gaming was run mostly from this device.

Q8(a)(iv)
The stronger candidates scored one of the available two marks for realising a high spec graphics card was required

Q9(a)
Most candidates gave a suitable SUM function formula

Q9(b)
Scored well by most candidates with a suitable multiplication function given

Q9(c)
Few candidates scored here. Part marks were gained by the stronger candidates for naming a cell reference that would be used in the calculation of wall area.

Q9(d)
Most candidates failed to give a suitable IF statement that would work here.

Q10(a)
Few candidates could understand what the variables were for the context of the model in the scenario given. The stronger candidates realised the size of the crowd was a factor but few mentioned the area affected by the fire or problems associated with less able people trying to leave the building.

Q10(b)
Good scores for most candidates realising a model did not behave like real people.

Q11(a)
Poorly scored. Candidates confused benefits to shop owners with benefits to customers and therefore were not awarded marks

Q11(b)
The stronger candidates scored one of the available two marks for benefits to customers using on-line shopping.

Q11(c)
The stronger candidates scored two of the available three marks for answers related to use of the internet to promote an on-line business

Q12(a)
Most candidates gained one of the available two marks for naming a suitable sensor. Few could say what use the sensor information is used in the system

Q12(b)
Poorly answered by most candidates. Most two mark answers were related to one aspect of controlling paper movement. Few candidates combined this information with paper position information and ink level information to give the full picture of control in this operation.

Q13
This question was mostly poorly answered. The stronger candidates gained four of the available seven marks, usually for start and stop commands, an input, error message and a loop. No candidate indicated the presence of a second loop and a count process.

Grade Boundaries – November 2009

Overall Grade Boundary 2H, 3A and 3B	*	A	B	C	D	E	U
	66	57	48	40	31	26	-

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