

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2010

IGCSE

IGCSE Information and Communication Technology

(4385) Paper 2H

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Publications Code UG024279

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General Comments

The overall qualifying responses of candidates were better than last year's responses. All candidates that had been prepared well by centres gained good marks

Some centres still allowed candidates to use extension sheets. This number was again significantly reduced this year.

Candidate Responses

Q1(a)

The majority of candidates gained at least four marks here for using the information in the question. The better candidates went on to add further detail for the additional 4 marks.

Q1(b)(i)

The majority of candidates gained the one available mark for 'security measures'

Q1(b)(ii)

Most candidates gained a mark for suggesting the second entry was to check for typing errors.

Q2(a)(i), Q2(a)(ii) and Q2(a)(iii)

Candidates seemed unable to rate the qualities of the different methods available for home network construction. The majority of candidates knew that WiFi was the easiest to adapt. Few could suggest a method that reduced interference or which one gave greater bandwidth.

Q2(b)

Most candidates gained two marks for 'Chat rooms' or 'news'. Many candidates confused services with features available on the internet.

Q2(c)

Good answers seen here mostly related to firewall operations. The better candidates discussed the full routing function of the device.

Q3(a)

The majority of candidates gained marks here for providing three factors that could be applied to a backup plan. The stronger candidates went on to explain how this would be applied.

Q3(b)(i)

Most candidates gained 2 of the available 4 marks here for suggesting encryption of data and access levels being applied. Candidates lost marks by not realising that passwords etc should be applied to the data files and not the system.

Q3(b)(ii)

The majority of candidates gained the available two marks for suggesting the use of a firewall to prevent access.

Q4(a)

Most candidates scored well here giving suitable methods for locating the required information on the internet.

Q4(b)(i)

Most candidates could provide two other suitable internet sources.

Q4(b)(ii)

Good responses given regarding a wiki as a source of information.

Q5(a)

Only the stronger candidates scored well here. Most could not suggest a suitable range of weights to test the system and also relate these weights to typical and extreme values.

Q5(b)

Few candidates explained the fact that there could be no upper or lower limits in the weighing system

Q5(c)

Most candidates scored at least one mark for using a decision box with the correct inequality. The stronger candidates gained marks for showing the box in the correct position on the diagram and some idea of how the emergency stop system worked.

Q6

Most candidates could give three suitable validation tests. Only the stronger candidates gave examples that related to the on-line form.

Q7

The majority of candidates gave suitable tasks to be performed by the software given. Marks were again lost by not linking software use to the business in hand.

Q8(a)

Most candidates gained two marks for suggesting a suitable key field and that it was unique data. Few gave additional information to suggest that there were other unique fields and the coded information was easier to validate.

Q8(b)

Most candidates gained the available two marks here for 'saving on storage space' and 'easier validation'. Some candidates are still assuming data is coded so that it is secret.

Q8(c)

The majority of candidates gained the two marks for providing a suitable product code.

Q8(d)

Poorly answered by the majority of candidates. Most gained a mark for suggesting three new fields are added to the database, but could not explain how this would work in practice.

Q9(a)(i) and Q9(a)(ii)

Almost all candidates gained the 2 available marks for correctly stating the required spreadsheet formulae.

Q9(b)(i)

The majority of candidates scored the available 2 marks for using the correct MAX function.

Q9(b)(ii)

Few candidates scored more than two marks here for using an IF statement and 'conditional formatting' only. The cell range and location of the maximum value were usually ignored.

Q9(c)

Few candidates gave a suitable method for providing an active link between the spreadsheet data and the word processed document. Most wanted to copy and paste the graph whereas a macro or OLE should have been used.

Q10(a)

Stronger candidates gained the 2 marks available for stating the maximum number of programmes on the hard drive and giving a suitable reason in support.

Q10(b)(i)

Most of the stronger candidates gained the 2 marks available for correctly estimating programme time.

Q10(b)(ii)

Few candidates scored well here. The stronger candidates gained 1 mark for data compression but few could expand their answer for the second mark available.

Q11(a)

Most candidates gained 4 marks here for correctly drawing a suitable star network with some of the required features. Some lost marks by placing the server at the centre of the network.

Q11(b)(i)

This question was poorly answered by most candidates. Candidates had confused a WAN network with a LAN network and discussed cheaper software purchases etc. Candidates should have looked at company usage in the wider sense and looked at centralised data storage, video conferences etc.

Q11(b)(ii)

This question was poorly answered by most candidates. Some of the stronger candidates discussed the time required to transfer data but could not suggest any other problems that could be associated with a centralised backup system.

Statistics

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E
Combined Boundary Mark Paper 2H + 3A + 3B	69	59	49	40	30	25

Note

Grade boundaries can vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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