# Examiners' Report
# Principal Examiner Feedback

# November 2023

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**General Comments**

There were approximately 1150 learners for the practical paper in this series. Most learners submitted work for all tasks. Tasks where work was not always submitted were database and word processing.

Work had been submitted electronically with examiners having access to the files apart from the database work where screenshots were included on the Evidence document.  The Evidence document also included responses to the theory questions.

Examiners were pleased to note that there was little evidence that learners accessed the internet during the examination. Internet usage during this examination is a breach of the regulations and may result in learners being disqualified.

**Data files**
There were very few issues with the data files reported to Pearson.

These files are produced in different formats so that centre staff can make sure that the files open using the software available during the examination. It should also be noted that only the appropriate version of the files should be available for learners.

Centre staff are reminded that the data files must remain confidential until after the end of the examination window printed on the front cover of the paper. It is a breach of the regulations for staff to discuss the contents of the data files with learners. They are made available before the examination in order that a member of staff can check that the files work with the hardware and software available during the examination. After they have been checked, the files should be copied into the learners' examination folders. A second copy in a sub-folder of the learners' exam folder is useful to enable them to re-start tasks should they wish to do so.

**Submitting evidence electronically**
Centres are reminded that each learner must have their evidence placed in a folder.  It is this folder that must be compressed and submitted.  Where evidence was submitted as individual files for each learner, centres were requested to resubmit correctly.  Candidates should be encouraged to only include the evidence for the assessment tasks, in this instance – EVIDENCE, EWF LOGO, HOME, CLASSES, PAYMENTS formula, PAYMENTS values, FILTER and LEAFLET.  No other files were required and it was sometimes difficult for examiners to find the evidence as files were saved in different folders.  With the html files, learners should have ensured their images used on the web pages were saved in the folder sent for marking rather than linking their images to their work areas.  Due to this there were web pages where no images were visible.

**Resources**
There are a number of past examination papers available on the Pearson website to use for practice so learners can get used to the format of the paper.  In addition, centre staff are reminded that Pearson offer the 'Ask the Expert' facility on its website where Senior Examiners can answer questions from staff about the specification and examinations.

**Specific Comments**
The examination consisted of five activities based on a fitness company.

**Activity 1: Graphics Software**
Task A1a required learners to create a logo based on given instructions. Most learners achieved marks for this task. Where marks were not awarded they tended to be for the logo not representing fitness. Generally, however, this task was done well.

A1b required learners to give two benefits and one drawback of using a vector image for a company logo. Where marks were awarded for the benefits learners usually mentioned the lack of distortion and storage space. Few learners understood the drawbacks.

**Activity 2: Database Software**
Learners were provided with a database file with three tables. Tables included data for the CLASSES, CLIENTS, and BOOKINGS.

In Task A2a, learners were asked to create a data entry form for the BOOKING table. Most learners created the form but did not always include appropriate evidence to support the width of the field headings (the properties should have been shown) or the instruction. Most achieved marks for the font and background colour.

Task A2b required learners to correctly enter a new record on their table. Most achieved full marks for this task.

Task A2c required learners to perform a query of clients who were not in the UK, paid monthly for classes and started them in 2022 or 2023. Most learners achieved marks for not being in the UK and paying monthly but some did not include both 2022 and 2023 in the criteria. Once the query had been completed, the results were required. Learners were expected to display certain fields in order (CLIENT ID, INITIAL, CLIENT NAME, YEAR STARTED) with CLIENT ID in descending order. Most learners achieved the marks for the order of fields and the descending order but few achieved a mark for fully displaying the field names and YEAR STARTED tended to be truncated.

A2d required learners to create another query for classes where Clare was the instructor that cost £6.00. This should have resulted in six classes and the details should have been presented with the fields in order of CLASS ID, DAY, TITLE and TYPE with ascending order of CLASS ID. Most learners achieved good marks for this task but there was little evidence in some cases to support the use of grouping on DAY.

A2e required learners to create the relationship between the three tables. Some included the lines but few included the one to many symbol to show how the tables were related.

Tasks A2fi to A2fiii required learners to show their understanding of databases. Few learners achieved marks for this section as although they showed use of the skills required to carry out the practical tasks, they achieved very few marks for the theory behind the use of databases. The questions on this paper were not answered well apart from most learners who achieved the mark for a primary key. Although they knew which key was the primary key, very few understood a

reason for its use. Some learners achieved a mark for a reason for using a lookup list but others left this blank.

**Activity 3: Web authoring software**
Most learners achieved some marks for this task.

For A3a there were 13 marks available split between two web pages – page 1 (9 marks) and page 2 (4 marks).

A design of the two pages was provided and included additional instructions for learners to complete to create both pages.  Most learners used the correct colours for the background and text and used the required HTML elements (<h1> and <p>).  The HOME page required the use of three images with a given size.  Unfortunately quite a few learners linked the images to their school/college user area which meant that although the file names and paths were present, no images were visible.  Learners must be reminded that any images used in their web pages must be copied to the folder that is being submitted and linked from there.  Most images were the correct size and the mark was awarded from the code.

Apart from the image issue, this task was completed well.

**Activity 4: Spreadsheet Software**
For this activity, learners were provided with an invoice for a client. Formatting was required that included merge and centre, shading and text colours, right alignment and an automated date.  This section was done well.

A named range was required but few learners achieved the mark for this.

B1bi - biv required learners to use functions and formulas to complete the spreadsheet.  Functions were required to display the duration of a class, the cost of a class and a message for a 5% discount (or if not applicable the cell should have remained blank).  All of these were done well apart from leaving the cell blank if there was no message.  Some learners put in other text or used -.

Formulas were required for the Total cost for the week. Total cost for the month and Total number of classes.  These were usually completed correctly.

Formatting of the spreadsheet to be shown in data view was usually done well for all but the inclusion of row and column headings when the spreadsheet was printed.

The filter part of the task was completed well and most learners achieved the mark for the correct filter but not all learners hid the other unnecessary information on the work sheet.

B3 was the theory section for spreadsheets.  Similar comments to the database section that although learners do well in the practical elements of the software, the understanding of its use is not always at the same level.   Most learners did however, correctly state that LEN was the function used to determine the number of characters in a given cell.

**Activity 5: Word Processing Software**
Learners were provided with a leaflet design that they had to create themselves. The design showed six columns (three on each page) and the instructions stated the requirements of each column. Where learners were able to create the correct number of columns they tended to follow the instructions well to complete an appropriate finished product. Some used more columns than required (up to nine) and some were unable to get the three per page.

Some learners used letter size instead of A4, few included alt text on the image, the icons and text were not always close together and there was too much use of white space.

Overall, there were a good number of learners who did well on this task to create a suitable leaflet.

**General comments**
Please ensure work is submitted as requested for future series in individual compressed folders for each learner. Where individual files are uploaded, the work will be returned to centres to be uploaded correctly.

Ensure learners only submit their work – the given data files are not required. In some cases evidence was difficult to find as it was saved in different folders. Some learners used a mixture of folders for their evidence which meant the examiner had to spend time looking in each folder to find the required evidence.

For all screenshots, learners should check that everything is visible for the examiner to see (and therefore mark) as if there is truncation or if screenshots are too small, marks cannot be awarded.