Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Information and Communication
Technology (ICT) (4IT1) Paper 02

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General Comments

There were approximately 1329 learners for the practical paper in this series. Most learners submitted work for all tasks. Where work was not always submitted it was usually for the word processing task although a few learners did not submit any screenshots for the database work.

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
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. Learners should be encouraged to only include the evidence for the assessment tasks, in this instance – EVIDENCE, LOGO SKETCH, STATIONERY, SALES and FLYER TEXT. No other files were required and it was sometimes difficult for examiners to find the evidence as files were saved in different folders.

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 stationery company.

Activity 1: Graphics Software
Task A1a required learners to create a logo based on a given sketch. Most learners achieved marks for this task. Where marks were not awarded they tended to be for the logo not using the correct outline and for the pad being drawn differently to the sketch. Some learners changed the name of the company to something other than PaperBase such as Paper Base.

Task A1b required learners to edit an existing image by adding some text and the logo. Most candidates attempted this and where marks were not awarded they tended to be for the name of the company not filling the width of the pad.

Activity 2: Database Software
Learners were provided with a database file with three tables. Tables included data for the CUSTOMERS, PRODUCTS, and ORDERS.

In Task A2a, learners were asked to create a data entry form for the PRODUCTS table. Most learners created the form but did not always include appropriate evidence to support the width of the COST value field or the change of font size on all field headings to 14. Most achieved marks for the logo added the header, the colour scheme and the background. Some learners included the option to save a record.

Task A2b required learners to correctly enter a new record on their table. Most achieved full marks for this task. Where marks were not awarded it tended to be for truncation of content or mis spelling of WILDPOCASE.

Task A2c required learners to perform a query of stationery products HETT1179 and LUND0377 purchased that cost more than £10. Some learners achieved marks including the correct criteria although some were not able to use 'or' correctly. Once the query had been completed, the results were required. Learners were expected to display certain fields in order (CUSTOMER ID, COST and PRODUCT NAME) with COST sorted in ascending order. Most learners achieved the marks for the order of fields and the ascending order but few achieved a mark for fully displaying the field names as the CUSTOMER ID tended to be truncated.

Task A2d required learners to create another query for clients who were members of the Loyalty Club. This should have resulted in 15 customers and the details should have been presented with the fields in order of INITIAL, CUSTOMER ID and EMAIL ADDRESS with ascending order on CUSTOMER NAME. Most learners achieved good marks for this task but were instances where marks were not awarded for the correct number of records and some learners did not remove the date and page numbers.

Tasks A2ei to A2eiv 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 understood the relationship between the three tables was one to many. A2ei asked learners to understand the data type that would be used for Yes/No but some repeated this as the answer.

Activity 3: Presentation software
Most learners achieved some marks for this task.

For A3a there were 16 marks available split between the creation of two slides.

A list of requirements for the slides was given in the assignment for each of the slides. Most learners achieved good marks for this task and presentations were fit for purpose. Where marks were not awarded tended to be for the image not being set as a background although most set the image to the required transparency. The date and email address did not always appear on both slides. Slide 1 required text to be entered in the bottom left of the slide but some learners included it too far to the top of the slide. Some learners correctly included action buttons to link between slides but some linked text in a text box.

Where learners did well – automated dates had been used, working links between slides, separate animations for the bulleted list of items, use of a pale yellow background and placement of headings.

Overall, this task was completed well.

Task 3b asked learners one question on the use of a house style in presentations which was only answered correctly by a few learners.

Activity 4: Spreadsheet Software
For this activity, learners were provided with partially completed spreadsheet. Formatting of the heading row was required that included cell shading, font enhancement and size and alignment. This section was done well.

B1a required learners to format the heading row on the PRODUCTS worksheet and this was done well apart from the serif font and alignment.

B1bi - bviii required learners to use spreadsheet tools to carry out a number of task using a range of functions and formulas to complete the spreadsheet. Functions were required to display the DISCOUNT amount for the item in the first row, the Highest item cost, the Total cost of all items sold with the discount included and a message for future reminders.

Formulas were required for the TOTAL COST for the first item and the COST WITH DISCOUNT. All these should have been replicated. Most learners achieved these marks.

Where marks were not awarded tended to be for using the multiplication in the VLOOKUP, although learners knew it should be used somewhere as they added it in later on a formula. Some learners used an incorrect cell reference for the sales and a few used < instead of > when referencing the 9.

B1bviii required sort on two columns (ascending on TYPE then descending on NUMBER SOLD) and this was done correctly by some learners. However, most learners only sorted on one of the columns.

Formatting of the spreadsheet required gridlines to be displayed when printed but this was not completed by some learners.

A chart was provided that required a title, axis labels and data labels. Most learners achieved a mark for the title and axis labels but few added the data labels. Where they were added, they were outside the columns without a white background. However, some learners used the white background but not in the correct location.

There were instances where learners did not use the correct data in the chart and included the discount as well as the items sold.

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.

Activity 5: Word Processing Software
Task B4a required learners to use a design and additional instructions to create a flyer.
There were 15 marks were available. Marks that were not often awarded – text was not added to the image but was placed above or below it, lines were not of equal length, alt text had not been included, the border on the image was not added, the table was not created as shown in the design.

However, some learners produced flyers that followed the design and covered instructions appropriately.

Task B4bi required learners to identify a weakness of the flyer and suggest a possible improvement. Some learners were vague and mentioned, for example, that colours were poor and to use better colours. For the marks to be awarded it is expected that learners mention a colour of something in particular such as the colour of the text in blue was hard to read, with a suitable suggestion that would improve this text.

B4bii and iii required learners to understand some theory about word processing. The proofreading question (ii) was covered well by most learners but some repeated content of the question with responses such as to check for spelling errors. Most learners understood the issue with PaperBase as a spelling error for one mark but did not show further understanding to follow through with the expansion.

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 may 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.