



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **Applied Business 8611/8613**

**BS05      Business Communication and  
Information Systems**

## **Report on the Examination**

*2007 examination - June series*

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## General Comments

Candidates appeared to cope with the combined practical and written approach to the paper. However, a significant minority of centres compromised candidates with incorrect entry of pre-released data. This was exacerbated by the fact that many centres failed to submit centre copies of the database making it difficult to judge whether technical errors were in fact a problem with the candidate's submitted work. Instructions provided in the Materials List clearly state that a hard copy of the centre's original file should be submitted.

## Question One

- (a),(b)&(c) Where data entry is required, entries must be accurate. On the whole, candidates were able to make additions and changes to the database, however, far fewer candidates were able to select and sort records, restricting their ability to gain full marks on the practical aspects of the paper.
- (d) Most candidates were able to produce a letter that contained relevant information. However, many candidates did not use a business letter format and appropriate language. Few candidates used the opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of the concept of mail merge. To gain higher marks candidates had to use accepted conventions of business letter layout in addition to including the information requested relating to membership renewal and the promotion of the new VIP Area.
- The majority of candidates attempted to edit the letter to send to Gold members (d(iv)) although a significant minority rewrote the original letter. When asked to produce business documents (eg memorandum letters, reports, notices, agendas) candidates must ensure that they use appropriate layout and language to access the full range of marks.
- (e) Few candidates gained full marks for this question. Many candidates were content to identify features of a database but failed to apply this to the question of how these features could aid the Nightclub in communicating effectively with its members.

## Question Two

- (a) Most candidates were able to identify the draft invitation of their choice. However, many candidates referred only to observations of the various visual features of the three invitations failing to consider what the invitations were trying to achieve. To achieve the higher marks available they needed to analyse the invitations in relation to their suitability in conveying the businesses message, ie encouraging members, celebrities and the media to attend the event.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to identify an information system that could be used. To achieve higher marks candidates were required to describe the chosen system in the context of aiding the administrator to monitor costs. Most candidates were content to identify a system and list its features but few candidates were able to refer to it in context.

- (c) Overall, this question was poorly answered by candidates. Many candidates were unable to demonstrate that they understood the terms **retrieve** and **disseminate**. The majority of answers merely described the features of the chosen system rather than identifying those features that related to the question.

### Question Three

- (a) Most candidates were able to identify that a work plan, Gantt chart or schedule would be required. However, few candidates were able to say how this could be used to ensure that tasks were completed on time meaning that the higher marks were rarely accessed. Candidates must be prepared to answer questions in context in order to demonstrate their understanding of the need for systems and ways in which they can aid a business or business activity.
- (b) & (c) Most candidates were able to provide a logical agenda and 'describe' why they had chosen to put items in a particular order. However, there was little evidence of 'justifying' why items had been placed in a particular order, particularly where one task relied on another.

A significant minority of candidates did not appear to understand the purpose of an agenda and treated the exercise as if they were actually performing the tasks rather than organising a meeting to discuss them. Candidates need to be aware of the purpose of business documents.

### Quality of Written Communication

This was assessed in questions 2(a) and 3(c). Whilst many candidates provided responses in continuous prose, it is important to note that it is not possible to gain high marks in these questions when answers are presented as bullet points/lists. For these questions clear presentation is essential. In question 2(a), marks for AO4 were also awarded for justification of the chosen invitation. In question 3(b), marks were also awarded for justification of the order of items for the agenda.

### Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.