General Certificate of Education

Applied Business 8610

BS05   Business Communication and Information Systems

Report on the Examination

2010 examination - June series

Question One

(a)   Most students were able to replicate the formula, and the vast majority could format the data as required. However, it was difficult to be sure, because a significant percentage appeared to be unable to print out the spreadsheet in landscape showing the formulae.

(b)   This question was not particularly well answered by students. Many did not read the instructions, and seemed to rely on repeating past paper answers. This possibly shows a lack of confidence and over-reliance on exam technique. Very few provided a total for the number of franchises that might be required, and many simply described the data on the spreadsheet rather than explaining the impact it might have on Jenny's decision.

(c)   The responses here were mixed. There seemed to be a general lack of understanding of what a data capture form is. This meant that some designs were completely inappropriate. Again, there was over-reliance on past paper tasks, with a significant number of students producing a poster. However, those students who understood the requirements of the task produced high quality designs that met the criteria outlined in the mark scheme.

Question Two

(a)   This was answered poorly by many students who appeared to have little or no knowledge of this area of the specification, or how to apply the knowledge they had in context. A significant number were aware of the relevant legislation and/or the issues of data security, but only at a very basic level, therefore they were unable to apply this to the context of the business.

(b)   This question was answered well by the majority of students. The only ones who failed to achieve at least Level 2 were those who misread the question and talked about email for example. Weaker students explained the advantages and isadvantages of communicating by telephone or through a meeting, whereas the more able discussed the effectiveness of each method in relation to Jenny's needs. Most students were able to achieve at least Level 1 Evaluation and a significant percentage justified their conclusion in context and achieved Level 2.

Question Three

(a)   There was further evidence in the responses to this question of reliance on past papers and a minority of students attempted to fit the task to something they felt more comfortable with. Most of those who understood the nature of the requirements of this question achieved Level 2 and described the requirements of the training day. However, some students ignored the 'in advance' part of the question. The most successful students were able to analyse the significance of particular tasks to the running of the event and made justified judgements based around the time available and the purposes of the day.

(b)   More evidence of not reading the question. A minority of students appeared to be determined to include content that they had learnt, even if it was not appropriate, eg posters to advertise the event. Weaker students were able to identify software/hardware that could be used within an activity but did not explain why particular software was appropriate given the nature of the activity. The most able students made good use of Item C to identify and explain where and how specific ICT could help support the training day.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the **Results statistics** page of the AQA Website.