

Examiner's Report

January 2010

GCE

GCE Applied ICT 6951 Paper 01

The Information Age

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Overall Comments

Important information

This specification has been updated and ALL candidates will be assessed on the updated version from SUMMER 2010. This version which has a blue cover and has been sent out to centres, many centres have attended the free inset sessions.

Moderated Units

Assessment Issues

Candidates need to supply explicit evidence to support their achievement of the criteria in the various marking grids. It is easier to confirm marks if the evidence is easy to find and supplied in an explicit form.

Assessors must use the e-sheets as an opportunity to explain why they have awarded marks, there are two advantages to this for the centre. If the moderator can see why and where marks are awarded it is easier to agree with the centre marks, secondly if the centre marks cannot be agreed then the moderator can give better guidance to help future assessment.

A number of centres still do not meet deadlines for submitting work to the moderators; the deadlines are published in advance and must be kept unless special permission has been obtained in advance from Edexcel. Permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Centres who miss the deadline risk having the results delayed or the candidates recorded as absent.

Each unit must be on a separate CD, even if sent to the same moderator. Each unit will be forwarded to different principal moderators for monitoring and auditing purposes.

Unit 1: The Information Age (6951)

General comments

Most of work seen was appropriate and gave the candidates good opportunities to meet the requirements of the specification. There are however still some centres using a series of pdf files for strands a) b) c) which are linked by an index page, as such this is not an e-book and candidates with this type of approach do not achieve high marks in the strands relating to the ebook and the multimedia.

The accuracy of the marking by centres was varied, where assessment was to national standards this was usually at the lower end of the Mark Bands. Some assessors made appropriate comments, however In many cases, the comments on the e-record sheets were too brief to be helpful, or gave no indication of how the assessor had applied the assessment guidance.

Strand A - On-line services:

There was generally a broad coverage of online services by most candidates. Some are still including two types of the same online service which are presented as different services which limits the marks they could be awarded.

At the top of the mark range good candidates covered the required depth by describing and evaluating more than one aspect of each service. In some cases the information presented was merely copied from sources, with no evidence that candidates understood what they were writing about.

However candidates did not always go into the required depth of coverage of each of the services. For example the only type of communication covered was email. To gain marks above MB1 candidates need to describe and evaluate more than one aspect of each service. Some candidates simply evaluated websites for this strand, rather than the services themselves.

It is possible to access some marks if fewer than five types of service are covered.

In future examination windows

Quality of Written Communication [QWC] is to be applied to this strand after the content mark has been determined by the assessor. The QWC is assessed and the mark is then adjusted, **within the band**, to give a final mark.

The following 'rules' apply.

The content mark cannot be **increased** on the basis of QWC.

If the content mark awarded is at the **bottom of a band**, the student's mark cannot be **reduced further**.

QWC should not be assessed elsewhere in the unit.

Strand B - Life in the information age

The focus of this strand is the impact of life. Some candidates still produce a lot of work that simply describes the technology, with little or coverage of how life is affected. The overall impact was often not discussed by many candidates. Candidates

could be encouraged to summarise and comment on the overall impact of ICT on life in the Information Age. This is essential to access the higher mark ranges.

In some case five different aspects were not present. This prevented candidates accessing the full range of marks for this strand. Although it is possible to access some marks if fewer than five are covered.

Strand C - Digital Divide

Most candidates described three or more factors leading to the digital divide. Some descriptions were very detailed others limited. Candidates mainly described aspects of the local divide rather than both local and global. Some comments were made about geographical and economical divides giving good examples. Evaluative comments were made by candidates on measures being taken to bridge the divide giving benefits and drawbacks, and the impact/extent of the divide.

To Gain marks in the higher ranges the candidates must cover the divide at all levels, Local, national and international.

Strand D - The e-book

Many candidates did not produce a title page for the people of 100 years in the future or it was poorly attempted. There was evidence of many candidates creating professional looking e-books. Most candidates had used appropriate software and multimedia design although there were still a lot of poorly chosen colour schemes and animations.

Most candidates e-books were well thought out and easy to navigate. The navigation links, where used effectively, made it easy to move from one page/section to another. Most candidates used simple, effective layout and structure. The majority of candidates showed a sound application of multimedia design using downloaded pages, web links, graphics, animations and screen shots. Some candidates e-books were very text orientated.

Standard ways of working were not always observed in that filenames were not meaningful and external assessors had difficulty in finding the start of the ebook..

Strand E - Components and structure

Many examples of well constructed e-books were seen. Evidence of testing is demonstrated by the fact that a fully function e-book had been produced, some candidates included test plans as further evidence, however this is not necessary.

To access the higher marks candidates need to include both ready made and original content. Better candidates included sound and video clips in there work, these were often in the form of a short interview or some background music to a page.

Links are still an issue, components were often missing due to the copying to CD. Centres must encourage candidates to copy the e-book to CD and test the links before it is sent for assessment.

Evidence of testing was often demonstrated by the fact that a fully function e-book had been produced, some candidates included test plans and feedback from others as further evidence..

Strand F - Evaluation

Most candidates managed to make some evaluative comment about their e-book but struggled to evaluate their own performance. A few incorporated feedback from others. To access the top mark band candidates must also suggest an improvement to their ebook. To gain full marks candidates must include feedback from others in the evaluation.

There were several examples of candidates producing questionnaires and scanning in completed copies. This shows that they have sought the feedback, but must then refer to this feedback and use it in a meaningful way in the evaluation.

Standard Ways of Working

In most cases the only evidence the external assessors had for this aspect was the bibliography and the file structures and names used by the candidates. In some cases it was difficult to locate the e-book or e-portfolios of candidates as these were often not well named.

Bibliographies are the main source of evidence to support the range of sources of information used by the candidate; too many candidates still give "Google" "Yahoo" and other search engines as the source of the information when clearly the source was a website found using them. Many candidates only quoted web sites, the specification requires a wide range of different sources to used for strands (b) and (c).

General Administration

Most samples were correctly submitted with folders clearly labelled with centre numbers, candidate number and first 2 letters of surname and first of Christian name. It would help if the e-record sheet naming convention is the same.

The centre assessor should use the e-record as an opportunity to help the moderator find the evidence required to agree the marks given. The comments by centres often contained only 1 line comments, in other cases no comments at all were provided. Some centres placed all units on the same CD, this can cause problems for the moderation team as samples of units frequently need to sent to different people during the moderation process.

Grade Boundary January 2010

6951	Total	A	B	C	D	E
Raw Mark	60	48	42	36	30	25
UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40

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