



General Certificate of Education

Information and Communication Technology 5521

Unit 1 Information: Nature, Role and Context

Report on the Examination

2007 examination – January series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2007 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

General Comments

In this January series of the examination both the AS and A2 units showed candidates achieving a good range of marks. There was clear evidence that many candidates were well prepared for the unit that they were attempting.

Candidates do need to be reminded to read the front of the question paper before beginning to read the questions themselves. It is clearly stated on the front of all GCE ICT question papers that, '*...the use of brand names will not gain credit.*' Marks were therefore lost by candidates using brand names of specific software packages as they must respond to questions with reference to generic types of software.

Some candidates gave answers to questions which have appeared on previous question papers or they repeated their answers within the same question. In any examination it is unlikely that any response in whole or in part would be credited more than once. Also the importance of reading a question properly cannot be stressed enough. It is imperative that candidates answer a question as it is asked, rather than simply give stock answers remembered from previous examination series.

Often questions cover topics that have been used many times in a similar, straightforward manner, yet some candidates fail to recognise the different topics, despite clues in the questions. A study of the specification, alongside past papers and mark schemes (available on the AQA Website) are likely to help candidates prepare more thoroughly for each examination.

Question 1

Many candidates could not explain what is meant by malpractice and crime. Candidates continue to write that malpractice is related to unintentional misuse, whereas a crime is committed deliberately. A good answer would have read:

'Malpractice is bad practice; this is when an employee breaks the company's code of practice. A crime occurs when someone breaks the law. This often occurs from outside the organisation.'

Question 2

(a) Most candidates answered this question well, stating that the individual concerned could write to the company or go in person with identification, but some candidates did not gain credit if they responded that applications could be made directly to the *Information Commissioner*.

(b) Candidates found a multitude of different ways of saying: 'to check the person's identity.'

(c) Various administrative costs such as postage and printing, or staff time were accepted.

Question 3

The fact that information has value was on the whole understood, but some candidates lost marks by referring to the value of data.

Question 4

Many candidates answered this question very well.

Question 5

This question was reasonably well answered with the majority of candidates able to gain at least one mark from each section. However, some candidates lost marks as they simply re-worded the question in their response. For example, some candidates wrote: 'Input is data *put in* to the computer system,' or, 'processing is when the data is *processed*'. The point about converting data into *information* was often missed.

Question 6

There was evidence of some good answers here with a great many candidates able to achieve at least half of the marks available. Some candidates failed to obtain the second marks as they did not provide an educational context to support their answers. Weak examples - such as using a projector, taking a register or storing records – did not gain credit if they did not refer to an ICT association.

Question 7

Many candidates did not use suitable examples in this question, but gave very general arguments as to why the three characteristics may be required by an ICT professional. A good answer to explain why an ICT professional would need to be willing to work flexible hours might refer to an ICT professional working on a help desk who would not be able to end the call until the user's problem had been solved, even though it may be the end of their working day.

Question 8

On the whole this question was answered well.

Many candidates gave an example of using e-mail to contact suppliers and customers, as this would save the cost of postage.

Well answered by many candidates who suggested that companies set up a web-site to sell their products on-line, which would open up a world-wide market and therefore reach more prospective customers.

Question 9

A wealth of experience of misusing the Internet was in evidence here. Happening upon pornographic images was a popular answer. Only one type of misuse – which usually was time wasting such as e-mailing friends, downloading music and playing games - was allowed. Other valid answers were that students may download a virus which could be prevented by having anti-virus software, or that they may try to copy and paste coursework from a website (some gave the correct word: plagiarise), this could be prevented by asking all students to give a list of the websites accessed in the bibliography which the teachers were then free to check.

Question 10

The candidates who read the question correctly gained high marks by giving the health problem, the software feature that could be used to prevent the problem and how that feature would prevent the problem. Most candidates picked up some marks by stating three relevant health issues, but some candidates who failed to read the question correctly went on to discuss the ergonomics of the workstation, a suitable chair and wrist-rests which did not gain credit.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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