



General Certificate of Education

Information and Communication Technology 2520

**Unit 4 Coursework: Practical Issues
Involved in the Use of ICT in the
Digital World**

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

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

Copyright © 2010 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.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX

General Comments

This was the second session that INFO4 work was submitted for moderation. The project reports seen were generally well presented and included evidence for all sections.

Solutions had been developed to a good range of original problems by the candidates; these solutions included training materials, security policies, websites and database management systems. It was pleasing to see several centres where groups of candidates had worked on related solutions.

It was pleasing to note that teachers at most centres made good use of the marking grid provided by AQA. For each row on the grid teachers indicated the mark obtained, often provided a page reference where the evidence could be found and a brief commentary as to why a mark had been awarded. Thank you, the moderation team found that this information really aided the process of moderation.

Background and Investigation

Better candidates provided a full introduction to the organisation that they had investigated that included the type, purpose and size of the organisation, and the scale of operation. Where several candidates from one centre are using the same organisation it is expected that this introduction would be similar but it should always be written by each individual candidate in their own words.

It was pleasing to see that better candidates used and justified relevant investigation techniques to inform their description of the current system/existing situation, the identification of both client and user(s) and the business case for change. Unfortunately some weaker candidates just used an investigation technique(s) to collect evidence and did not then use the information they had acquired.

Better candidates included requirements that showed what their client wanted and supported this with a justification related to the evidence collected. It is worth reminding candidates that the client's requirements should relate to what the organisation needs e.g. a workforce that can effectively use a range of portable computing devices, rather than how to provide the solution.

Analysis and Deliverables

Not all candidates stated the scope of the project, thus failing to identify exactly what areas the solution was to cover. Following the investigation of the existing situation candidates need to outline the solution they intend to develop in order to fulfil the client's requirements.

Most candidates analysed and described their proposed system, identified deliverables, processes and users' skills that would inform the subsequent design process. Better candidates provided evidence to show that their findings had been checked by their client.

Most candidates included qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria that showed some understanding of how their solution should be assessed. Only the very best candidates ensured that these matched their client requirements set out in the Background and Investigation Section.

Design

Many candidates just discussed the different types of software available rather than providing alternative design solutions to the problem under investigation and could gain little credit. Any discussion needs to clearly relate to the problem being solved and can include methods and style of solution, choice of hardware and software, and procedures to be adopted. Better candidates objectively considered alternative design solutions in relation to their client's requirements.

Most candidates provided a design but in order to gain good marks there needs to be evidence that the design has been amended in the light of specific comments on that design from the client, not just a short general statement of approval signed by the client. Few of the reports seen provided evidence to show that the final design had been approved by the client or included an explanation of how the design met the client's requirements.

The development plans presented by the candidates varied in quality, better candidates' plans included clearly identified steps for implementation, testing, installation/introduction and training, the best plans clearly related to the candidate's client's requirements and agreed deliverables with agreed deadlines and expected durations for each part of the plan. Whilst the use of Gantt and Pert charts can be useful, they must contain sufficient detail to be meaningful for the reader. Centres should remind candidates that this plan should show the timeline for the solution being developed, not the student's project report.

Plans for testing should include a clear justified strategy to show how the effectiveness of the implemented solution will be tested. This should then be broken down into a series of planned tests. Tests should be included that allow assessment of whether both the client requirements and all the evaluation criteria have been met. As stated in the specification, evidence of functional or unit tests is not required so there is no need to show this type of testing as part of the test plan although recognition that these need completing should be shown in the strategy.

Testing and Documentation

Most candidates included evidence of testing their solution. However, centres are reminded that the specification states 'Testing should concentrate on the testing of complete processes and the system as a whole.' Many candidates showed testing of the processes included in their system but very few provided evidence of testing the solution as a whole. Testing was nearly always undertaken by the candidate, not all reports included evidence of the solution being tested by the client and its potential users.

The documentation produced should be that agreed with the client, it could be a user guide, systems maintenance manual, technical documentation or an agreed set of appropriate documents, for example a general user guide and a set of 'Getting Going' cards for specific types of user, or a set of procedures for regular updating of a security policy. As the documentation to be supplied to the client is part of the system developed, it should be tested by the users that it was produced for to ensure it is appropriate for their needs and it meets the client's requirements. There is no requirement to produce an implementation commentary.

In order for a candidate to demonstrate that the documentation provided is appropriate (or not) for the people who are going to use it, the candidate should review the results of the testing carried out using the documentation and draw conclusions that can be justified from the evidence provided.

Evaluation

Most candidates attempted to evaluate their solution but the evaluations seen were not always well structured and factual.

Centres are reminded that candidates need to evaluate their implemented solution by critically considering:

- the solution as a whole, its strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement;
- whether the solution is proven to meet each of the stated evaluation criteria and each of the identified client's requirements;
- the strengths and weaknesses in the approach they have taken and how to improve their performance on similar future projects.

The above should be cross reference to supporting evidence provided in the Testing and Documentation Section.

Report

Most candidates provided a well-structured report that made good use of the software available. Centres are reminded that electronic templates must not be provided to be used for the candidates' reports as marks are available for the project's organisation and structure. Both teachers and candidates can use the specification and marking grids as guides to the required content and structure of the report.

Candidates should ensure that all illustrative material included in the report is easily readable, this includes amongst other items charts, scanned documents and screenshots.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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