

OCR AS ICT

Frequently Asked Questions

OCR AS ICT G062 June 2013 (version 2)

General

1. I don't think the software available within my centre will enable me to successfully complete all elements of a particular task. What should I do?
 - Either consider purchasing software that will enable this (budget permitting) or investigate a number of widely available open source or freeware products that are available. Try this link:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_free_and_open_source_software_packages
2. Is any additional guidance available?
 - Yes. There is a document called 'Guidance for Teachers' that is available for download on Interchange. It contains details regarding what is meant by certain terms such as annotated evidence and the general standard expected for items such as test plans or user guides.

Task 1

1. What is meant by a 'Common File Format' for the logo requirements in 1a?
 - A common file format will be deemed to be any format that is in common usage that will allow the logo to be used within a range of packages e.g. .gif, .jpeg, .png. The format must not be proprietary.
2. Does the hand drawn layout design in 1b(i) require fonts to be specified?
 - No. Only the layout is required. The layout of all the items required must be shown.
3. What evidence actually needs to be annotated as distinct from just printing in 1b(ii)?
 - The method used to automatically display the edition month and year must be annotated. All other requirements in 1b(ii) will be assessed from the print-out.
4. Is the method used for the edition month and edition year important?
 - Yes. The month and year should appear automatically when the template is used to create a new edition of the newsletter. The date should not then change if the document is then opened again at a later time.
5. Which trips should appear in the table in 1c for the 'next five club trips'?
 - This will depend upon when the candidate creates the edition of the newsletter and thus the next five trips may differ. All valid sequences of five trips will be accepted.
6. Do the trips in the table have to be populated automatically?
 - No. This would be far more complex and more marks would have been awarded if this was required. Candidates can prepare the values in whatever way they see fit.

7. Does it matter which month the edition of the newsletter is for?
- No. It will depend upon which month the candidate uses their template.

Task 2

1. My centre does not have Adobe Flash – has the animated banner been written with this in mind?
- There are many packages that can be used to create an animated banner. Try the free package Vectorian <http://vectorian.com/> for instance for a package similar to Flash or use a package that can create animated GIFs e.g. Serif.
2. Will the logo and the club name cover the images in the banner?
- The banner is size is 1000 pixels by 150 pixels. The images must be this size. The club's name and logo will appear within this canvas size of 1000 pixels by 150 pixels so will appear over the top of the images. The club's name and logo will appear throughout – so they should not fade in / out with the images – they should remain constant.
3. What does the requirement to 'fade in' and fade out' mean in practise?
- A proprietary fade-in fade-out effect is not required. Any way of creating a transition effect between the images will be sufficient. Some software will have effects built in that will make this a simple process. Alternatively, with a bit of creativity, images can be copied and photo edited at different brightness/contrast levels.
4. How should the time for the images be divided for the animation in 2a(ii)?
- This is up to the candidate. As long as the total time for the complete animation adds to 30 seconds for the 4 images it doesn't matter how long each image takes.
5. What is required in the structure diagram in 2c(i)?
- Only the hyperlinks between the pages within the site, external sites and internal documents need to be included. There is no requirement to explain any data flows.
6. My centre uses Serif WebPlus and I am concerned that it is difficult to produce a solution with a CSS file that will meet the requirements. Is it possible?
- It is possible to use some versions of Serif WebPlus but it will be more time-consuming to produce evidence of the solution. There are a number of free packages such as Kompozer and Simple CSS that can be used to good effect.
7. Is the website meant to automatically watermark the images?
- No. Whilst c(iii) asks for the evidence of watermarking it is envisaged that this will be completed during the production of the website in 2c(ii).

8. Does the trips page need to filter the trips available in the drop-down list for 2c(v)?
 - No. There is no need to filter trips to remove those that may have already have taken place. This would add greater complexity to the solution than has been specified.
9. What is meant by 'as a single process' for the watermarking procedure in 2c(iv)?
 - It would not be acceptable to manually add a watermark to each photo in a graphics package. Some packages may allow a batch operation (a good opportunity to look at batch processing!). Some online services will also allow a number of images to be uploaded and watermarked automatically too.

Task 3

1. Do candidates have to print the row and column headings?
 - Yes. Marks cannot be awarded without row/column headings. They are required so that formulae can be cross-referenced with values to check that the solution is correct.
2. I'm not sure about Pivot Tables and Pivot Charts. Do you have links to resources?
 - There's a very helpful site on YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/user/ExcelsFun> called ExcelsFun with hundreds of clips on Excel functions.
3. Are the terms *product* and *jacket* interchangeable?
 - Yes. Where the term product is used it means the jacket types that are available (HardShell, Fleece or Softshell).
4. For the pivot chart in 3(c) does an overall total for each type of jacket need to be displayed?
 - No, just the total number of red and black jackets for each type of jacket is required.
5. How should the member charges for each jacket type be calculated in 3(d)?
 - The costs should be calculated fairly. This means that VAT is paid on the cost per unit and on top of this a proportion of the bagging, shipping and machine set-up is paid by each member (including VAT). E.g. If jacket A unit cost is £1000 you would expect the member to pay £1200 plus their share of the bagging, shipping and machine set-up cost. If Jacket B unit cost is £10 you would expect the member to pay £12 plus their share of the bagging, shipping and machine set-up cost.
6. How many tests will be marked in 3(e)?
 - Only the first 3 tests that the candidate documents will be marked. If the candidate gives more than 3 tests the forth and subsequent will not be marked.

Task 4

1. What is a suitable primary key for a given table in 4(a)?
 - As long as a candidate chooses a field that uniquely identifies a record within a table they will not be penalised. E.g. Candidate A might use the membership number field as a key field for the membership table. Candidate B might decide to add a new field called MemberID. Either approach would be accepted. The assessment will be based upon whether or not a solution can be successfully generated and not upon any particular interpretation of normal forms or 'best practice'.
2. How will candidates know what is an appropriate validation rule for the email address in 4b(ii)?
 - Candidates will need to research the topic. There is no shortage of information available on the internet. The email addresses to test will either be clearly valid or clearly invalid. The rule the candidate generates must distinguish valid/invalid addresses and the candidate must explain how their rule works.
3. For what years should the totals for the membership report be generated in 4c(i)?
 - Different results may occur if different interpretations are made. It is envisaged that the results will be based on the member subs records provided from 2010 to 2012. If a student produced a more complex solution back through time or included the figures for 2013 because they had already completed part (d) before documenting (c) they would not be penalised. The assessment will focus on the annotation and explanation of an appropriate query.
4. For the report in 4c(i) there is a member who joined the club in 2010 but who does not have a member's subs record until 2011. Should they appear in the totals for 2010 or not?
 - Either candidate interpretation would be deemed valid i.e. using just the records in the members subs data files or using the date the member first joined. It is the skills of creating and annotating and explaining an appropriate query that will be assessed.
5. What customised 'Buttons to allow record navigation' are required in 4d?
 - As a minimum there will need to be a previous record and a next record button.

Useful Spreadsheet Skills

Cells

- Formatting (alignment, wrapping, data type)
- Conditional formatting
- Naming cells
- Relative and absolute references
- Validation

Specialised functions

- Lookup functions – HLOOKUP, VLOOKUP, LOOKUP, INDEX
- Rounding functions – ROUND, INT, CEILING
- Logical functions – IF, nested IF, AND, OR

Worksheets

- Naming
- Linking

Pivot tables

- Pivot charts

Customised interface controls

- Drop down combo box / list box
- Check box
- Spinner / Scroll bars
- Buttons

Macros

- Attaching a macro to a control or button

Useful Database Skills

Tables

- Primary key identification and assignment
- Field data types
- Field validation (rules and input masks)
- Importing data from another data source

Relationships

- Creating a foreign key
- Referential integrity

Form design

- Simple form based upon one table
- Customising e.g. removing the default navigation bar and adding buttons
- Discussion of bound controls (linked to the underlying table) and unbound controls that can be created to include expressions
- Sub-forms to show data from a 1:M relationship or the results from a query

Queries

- Simple parameter
- Complex parameter
- Parameters taken from form values
- Query joins (Left and Right Join)
- Cross-tab query
- Actions queries (Update, Make Table, Append, Delete)

Reports

- Basing a report on a query
- Adding calculations to reports e.g. totals
- Grouping levels and pagination by grouping level

Calculations and Macros

- Writing expressions to perform calculations
 - Domain aggregate functions e.g. DSUM and DCOUNT to extract results from queries
 - DateDiff, DateAdd, Now()
 - IIF and nested IIF
- Creating sequences of instructions for more complex processing e.g. creating a macro to run an archive routine