



General Certificate of Education

Applied Business 8611/8613

**BS05 Business Communication and
Information Systems**

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - June series

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General Comments

Candidates were able to cope with both the practical and written elements of the question paper. Candidates recognised command words such as 'explain', 'analyse' and 'discuss' which enabled them to achieve the higher marks. Unfortunately, a large number of candidates interpret 'discuss' as 'list as many alternatives as possible' which meant that they only achieved the lower mark bands.

Once again, the majority of centres failed to submit centre copies of the draft flyer, word processing file and email reply, which made it difficult to judge whether or not technical errors were a problem with the candidate's submitted work. Instructions provided in the Materials List clearly state that a hard copy of the centre's original file (centre copy) should be submitted.

Question One

- (a) (ii) Most candidates were able to copy and paste the text and replace the text & (b) (i) 'Title'. Fewer candidates changed the order of the text and a minority did not keep to the three box layout. A significant minority of candidates were unable to create a suitable title which clearly indicated the nature of the business.
- (b) (iii) Most candidates were able to demonstrate at least two formatting techniques and an encouraging number used the opportunity to apply their skills effectively. However, the majority of candidates did not follow the instructions in the question to communicate the benefits of the business, and, as a result, restricted their ability to gain high marks.
- (c) Most candidates were able to insert images into the document. Slightly fewer candidates selected appropriate images and even less considered the size and positioning of the images and the flow of text around them. Again this prevented candidates from achieving high marks.
- (d) Few candidates gained full marks on this question. Many candidates described the content of the email rather than the layout and formatting. Those that gained the highest marks discussed the layout or formatting in terms of communicating the benefits of KVP. The majority of candidates used inappropriate language and style for this type of communication.

Question Two

- (a) Most candidates were able to state and describe a valid method of communicating with customers, and many made good use of Item B. However, very few 'explained' how the benefits of pet insurance might be communicated. This restricted their ability to achieve the highest level.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to describe a valid information system and explain how it might help to improve KVP's patient record information system. Fewer candidates used Item B to any great extent and only a minority analysed the improvements in context.
- (c) The majority of candidates were able to propose improvements to the current method of communication and explain possible advantages or disadvantages. The majority of candidates also tried to use Item B in their explanation and a significant number analysed the effectiveness of their proposals. Only a few candidates attempted to judge the relative importance of the possible improvements to the effectiveness of communication. There was a general tendency to include as many alternatives as possible rather than analysing and evaluating one proposal in depth. This skill of developing a line of argument, rather than listing briefly all possible options, should be encouraged.

Question Three

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to describe the features of software and most also explained how it could be used to publicise the RCVS standards award.
- (b) Most candidates were able to provide a logical order for the tasks and describe why they had chosen to put the tasks in their chosen priority for completion. Stronger candidates explained the importance of each task and demonstrated some judgement when discussing the order of tasks. However, there was less evidence of 'justifying' the order in terms of analysing the relative importance of the tasks and making a judgement about why some tasks were more important than others. A significant number of candidates still did not recognise the importance of business communication in the planning process (tasks three, four and five) and, as this is fundamental to the specification, it continues to be an area to be addressed by centres.

Quality of Written Communication

This was assessed in questions 2(c) and 3(b)(ii). Most candidates provided responses in continuous prose, although very few achieved higher level AO4 marks.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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