



General Certificate of Education

Applied Information and Communication Technology 8751, 8753, 8756 & 8759

IT03 Data Handling

Report on the Examination

2009 examination - June series

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Unit 3: Data Handling (IT03)

General Information

It was noted that a number of new Centres had started the Specification for the first time this series. For these Centres it is recommended that in addition to this Examiners' Report, those for the previous series are studied as they contain much detail that may be of use.

For both units Centres should ensure that the current version of the Marking Grid is used. These can be obtained from the AQA website. Some portfolios were marked using the 2007 or 2008 versions. Most assessors included clear page references that indicated where marks had been awarded, which is most helpful and all centres should endeavour to do this.

In both units the evaluation required is of the solution produced, rather than of the candidate's performance.

Much of the work submitted was accurately assessed, with marking grids that referenced the pages where evidence had been found.

AO1 assesses the practical aspects of the solution, in particular whether the software used has been utilised to produce an appropriate solution for the client. The wording of some rows on the Marking Grid is very similar to some of those in AO3. However, AO1 is concerned with the practical aspects of creating the solution, whilst AO3 is concerned more with the design of the solution and consideration of the inputs, processing and output required to ensure that the solution meets client requirements.

A substantial number of candidates had been awarded high marks for their data structures, data types and formats and had provided evidence that these things had been specified and implemented correctly, with the appropriate explanations. Some, though, had not accurately specified these prior to implementation and in some cases they were incorrectly implemented. Most candidates had specified data structures that were relational, though some appeared extremely complicated. A solution that requires two or three related data tables is sufficient to achieve maximum marks. Candidates should provide a 'data dictionary', some form of entity relationship diagram, showing the tables at the implementation stage and the relationships that have been created between tables.

As well as specifying their data structures candidates should design the processing that will take place and the outputs that result. Many candidates only showed the results of processing and query by example grids, or report design views. To gain full marks the queries and reports that will be produced, or forms based on queries, should be designed to show what processing will take place.

Some candidates showed the outputs that resulted from queries but did not include the query by example grids (the Design View in Access) that allowed the assessor/moderator to see how the queries were structured. Both are needed to award marks on AO1, Row 3.

It was clear that many candidates understood and could implement measures to ensure the validity of data inputs, also explaining why this was necessary. It was also clear that the majority of candidates did not understand how to ensure that the data being input was correct (verification). The candidates who did understand this difference generally explained the measures that they would take very clearly by, for example, suggesting that the user repeat back the order taken over the phone before saving the order record, or by printing out a copy of

the reservation taken and sending it to the client. These candidates often achieved full marks, whereas candidates who did not understand the difference achieved only one mark.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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