General Certificate of Education

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

IT01   **ICT and Society**

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

Unit 1: ICT and Society (IT01)

Centres new to the unit should also refer to Reports on the Examination for previous series.

General comments

It was very apparent that all centres had prepared their candidates well for the examination and some excellent work was seen. The standard of responses to the task was generally high, with many candidates presenting their work extremely well and many candidates gaining high marks for their work.

A considerable number of candidates submitted excessive amounts of material particularly for sections i) and j), much of which did not contribute to the marks awarded. The time taken might have been better employed in completing other sections of the work. Candidates should only include work that is required in items a) to o) in the Candidate Booklet. Multiple copies of questionnaires should not be included, as a single completed copy and a summary show what research or testing has taken place.

Some excellent scripts consisting of around 50 pages of work were seen where candidates gained high marks. These candidates showed a good understanding of the requirements of the examination, with work focussed on the requirements of the task set.

It was apparent from the evaluations of some candidates that they mistakenly thought it necessary to produce large numbers of screenshots. It is recommended that centres advise candidates to create only sufficient screenshots to present their evidence effectively.

There was also evidence that some candidates had not read the task closely enough and so gave examples that did not meet the requirements. This limited the marks available to them. Most candidates submitted their work in the order of the tasks in the Candidate Booklet and numbered all pages consecutively as required. The candidate's name, examination number and centre number should also be put on every page. The majority of work was submitted as requested, securely bound using treasury tags.

Centres are reminded that screenshots or pages that cannot be seen or read by the Examiner will not gain marks. Candidates should ensure that screenshots are large enough to be visible and that they avoid unsuitable font styles and/or colour combinations in the work produced. This is particularly important in item (k) where 24 of the 70 marks available are awarded.

There were a number of administrative lapses where the required documentation was not submitted with the candidates' work. All scripts should have a Candidate Record Form securely attached, signed by both candidate and supervisor, and the work from the centre should be accompanied by the attendance list, Centre Declaration Sheets and Record of Controlled Conditions, thus avoiding unnecessary delays in the examination process.

The task
The purpose of the task was to inform undergraduates of the effects that ICT is having on the media industry and how this is affecting society. Candidates were required to give examples of how ICT may be used in the media industry and the benefits and/or drawbacks for society of its use. They also had to include details of how one piece of ICT legislation, relevant to the media industry, could affect the general public.

Tasks carried out during Investigation Time

Items (a) and (n)
Many candidates scored full marks on these tasks with most providing good explanations for any changes to their time plans or missed deadlines. A small number inappropriately described the tasks they had carried out. There were still a few who failed to include both the planned and actual time/date.

Item (b)
The majority of candidates stated clearly who their audience was and then carried out good research on their target audience, mainly through questionnaires. However there were a significant number who did not make clear who their audience was and others who appeared not to understand who undergraduates are and inappropriately used their classmates for their research. These candidates were not able to gain full marks on this item.

The full three marks for this section are awarded for the quality of the candidate's assessment of how the target audience's needs have an impact on the content and layout requirements. This was often neglected by candidates; though they had produced reams of research results there was little or no consideration of the implications on the content and layout of the pages to be produced.

Item (c)
Generally candidates were able to give appropriate evaluation criteria relevant to the scenario, covering the purpose and audience. However, even some of the better candidates failed to produce good criteria. In some instances this was because they had written 'to do lists' whilst others produced did not address the purpose of the web pages or the audience needs. Candidates who gave only limited or generic criteria were limited to the first mark.

Item (d)
The majority of candidates quoted more than one range of sources and followed the guidance for writing a bibliography in the Candidates' Booklet, thus achieving the maximum three marks. Candidates are reminded that Google Images is not a **source** of images, merely a tool used to find image sources.

Item (e)
Many candidates produced three, well annotated, sketches that included notes about suitability for the audience, so gaining three marks. Those designs that showed little apart from the general layout of text areas, links and pictures only gained one mark.

Item (f)
The majority of candidates provided good evidence of testing their draft designs by getting feedback from a sample of their target audience and then summarising their findings and drawing conclusions for the final design.

Item (g)
Some very good detailed designs were seen. The candidates who ensured that the designs included enough information for another person to create their pages and showed a good range of features scored high marks. These candidates usually also fully annotated their work, justifying all their design choices, often referring to their audience research from Item (b). Some candidates produced neat diagrams for each page but gave insufficient details of measurements and other features such as tables, columns and backgrounds. These candidates did not carry out sufficient annotation to gain more than 2 or 3 marks out of the 8 available in this section.

Tasks carried out under controlled conditions
During the Controlled Conditions sessions candidates should be provided with all their preparation work carried out for items (a) to (g) and (n) as **hard copies,** plus their research text and images in electronic format. Text must only be stored as **basic text files**. Images must be stored as **individual graphics files**. Microsoft Word and similar formatted files are not allowed. Items (a) to (g) must **not** be made available in electronic format. Candidates are permitted to add to their research material during the Controlled Conditions period by following the procedures detailed in the Teachers' Notes.

Item (h)
Most candidates provided clear screen shots of their files showing the files of textual material and image files necessary to complete the examination, as required. Image files alone are not sufficient.

Item (i)
Most candidates followed the correct procedure and annotated their web pages to point out some of the software features they had used and the reasons for using them. However, many candidates unnecessarily captured screenshots of every step they made. This often resulted in many pages of information that did not contribute to the marks awarded. Better candidates selected a few appropriate screenshots that they then annotated well, explaining the features they had used and why they had used them.

Item (j)
Many candidates provided extensive records of development and the better candidates clearly showed how they had enhanced the pages. Candidates should also be aware that extensive cropping of screenshots often does not allow the examiner to see how the pages have been built up.

Screenshots at **significant** stages of development for each page, well explained with decisions justified, are most appropriate for this item. It is important to note that the marks are awarded for work that shows the development of the web pages, not the template for the pages.

There was much evidence of candidates correctly matching their research files to the content of the website. The best candidates provided this explanation as a separate annotated set of screen shots, one screenshot per page. The original source of the information is not required here. Those who did not cross-reference their images, as well as the textual content, did not gain the final available mark. Candidates who had put all their research in one file also found it difficult to gain the third mark.

Item (k)
Most candidates had evidently carried out good research into the topic and some well-informed articles were seen. Topics included downloading and streaming music; podcasts; uses of ICT in film production through animation, 3D simulations, movie editing and project planning; the interactive use of digital TV; software used for music and sound production, dtp, graphics systems and database recording systems. Uses of more general ICT systems such as websites, office or desktop packages, digital photography and social networking sites only gained credit if the candidate had given a use relevant to the scenario. Some candidates repeated their examples and so limited the marks that could be awarded. Better candidates were able to explain the benefits and drawbacks of their examples not only for the media but for society as a whole.

Weaker candidates often omitted to describe the benefits and drawbacks of their examples and used very poor language, or gave over-technical descriptions inappropriate for the target audience.

The majority of candidates accurately described copyright legislation or the Digital Economy Bill and were able to describe the law in the context of the media industry. Weaker candidates found it hard to explain the implications of the chosen legislation for society as a whole.

Most candidates presented clearly readable pages. However a few candidates did not ensure that their work could be read and examiners struggled to see what they had written in order, in some instances being unable to award marks. A useful method adopted by some candidates was to print their pages on A3 paper with landscape orientation while others printed their work without the background so the text was clear.

Many candidates referenced the source of their research within the text of the pages and the better candidates referenced all of their images as well as the textual information used.

Item (l)
Most candidates gained the first two marks by explaining how they had met their evaluation criteria. A few produced a comprehensive evaluation that contained good evaluative comments and clearly demonstrated the suitability of their web pages for both audience and purpose, referenced to their evaluation criteria, and so gained the third mark.

Item (m)
The majority of candidates described how they had overcome problems, gaining 1 of the 3 marks available. Most of these also used screen shots, or referred to those created for item (j) to explain how problems were overcome and made comments on their own performance for the second mark. Very few candidates provided detailed explanations, cross referenced to their time plans, a) and n), and the development of the pages in item j) to gain the third mark.

Item (n) - see (a) and (n) above

Item (o)
The majority of candidates produced screenshots of their files but many were unclear which files contained their research material, annotating their finished documents instead. Additions and amendments to their text and image files is what is required in the annotation or a statement to the effect that none were made.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades
Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the **Results statistics** page of the AQA Website.