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June 2011**

**Applied Information and
Communication Technology**

IT01

**(Specification
8751/8753/8756/8757/8759)**

Unit 1: ICT and Society

Report on the Examination

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

The scenario appeared to be highly accessible to candidates. However, many candidates ignored the emphasis and requirements of the set task and tackled it in a similar way to tasks set in previous series. They were required to explain ways to overcome any drawbacks when using ICT but many candidates just explained the drawbacks without any indication of how to overcome them. Many of these candidates also just listed the benefits the members could obtain by using ICT systems rather than illustrating them in detail.

A significant number of candidates submitted excessive numbers of repetitive screenshots, most of which did not contribute to the marks awarded. A smaller number of well selected screenshots with suitable commentary generally gains more marks than a large number with little relevant explanation. Candidates are advised to consider how best to spend their time during the Controlled Conditions in order to maximise their marks.

Many candidates also submitted all the questionnaires that they had used to carry out research into the target audience and/or to test their designs. A single completed copy of any questionnaire and a summary of responses sufficiently shows the examiner what research or testing has taken place.

Candidates should only include work that is required for items a) to o) in the Candidate Booklet. Brochures or printed web pages from their research sources should not be submitted.

Most candidates arranged their work in the order of the items 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. If A3 pages are submitted these must be secured in such a way that they are able to be opened easily so that the whole page is clearly visible to the examiner. Plastic wallets should not be included.

In this series the quality of written communication was assessed in item k). Candidates who showed a thorough understanding of the issues involved in the task, addressed their points clearly to the audience and presented their work appropriately, gained high marks. Where the choice of font style or colour combinations made work difficult to read, or poor print quality made the work illegible, candidates gained few marks. Some candidates had sensibly identified that it would not be possible for the examiner to read their work in hard copy and had then amended the printed copy so that it could be read. It was possible to give these candidates appropriate credit.

Centres are reminded that all scripts should have a Candidate Record Form securely attached, signed by both candidate and supervisor. The scripts should be accompanied by the Attendance List, Centre Declaration Sheets and Record of Controlled Conditions.

Centres should carefully check the files of research material that candidates submit to ensure that they contain only pure text, e.g. '.txt' files, or images, before allowing access to them in Controlled Conditions. These are the only files that are allowed. Items a) to g) are not permitted to be accessed in electronic format.

The task

Candidates were asked to produce a newsletter to explain to members of a senior citizens' social club how they can use ICT in their lives and to illustrate the benefits the members could obtain by using ICT systems. They were also asked to explain what restrictions the Computer Misuse Act and copyright legislation place on the use of ICT and to give advice on how to overcome any drawbacks when using ICT.

Tasks carried out during Investigation Time

Items (a) and (n)

Many students gained three marks in this section. A few failed to gain the third mark because their monitoring comments did not explain the reasons for making changes to the plan. Candidates using Gantt charts must ensure that they clearly show both planned and actual time periods with a suitable key and annotations.

Item (b)

Most candidates were very clear about who their audience was, had interviewed some senior citizens and recorded their results thoroughly. Those candidates who also discussed the impact of the audience's characteristics and/or requirements on content and layout gained maximum marks.

Candidates who gained high marks asked and answered questions such as:

- Who might read my newsletter?
- What do I know about them?
- How can I find out? e.g. sample of a questionnaire
- What other newsletters may appeal to the same audience and why?
- What are the needs of my audience in terms of layout and content?

Item (c)

The concept of evaluation criteria is not well understood by many candidates who often incorrectly produced 'to do' lists instead.

Candidates are expected to pose questions that could be used to assess how effective their pages will be in fulfilling their purpose and satisfying the audience.

Those candidates that listed evaluation criteria that were clearly related to the scenario, and were suitable for assessing the newsletter's appropriateness for audience and purpose, gained full marks.

Item (d)

Those students who showed that they had used a range of sources and followed the guidance for writing a bibliography in the Candidates' Booklet gained three marks in this section. Some candidates reduced their marks by only using online resources and/or ignoring the guidance.

Item (e)

Many candidates produced sketches that were well annotated and included notes about the suitability of the designs for the audience, thus gaining three marks. A few candidates achieved only one mark for providing simple designs that labelled only text and image areas.

Item (f)

The majority of candidates were able to demonstrate that they had tested their draft designs on members of the target audience and had then drawn conclusions from their testing, thus gaining both available marks. Some candidates did not use their draft designs for the testing at this stage and so gained no marks.

Item (g)

The standard of designs was quite variable. In some cases candidates had produced unnecessarily detailed draft designs but did not put this detail into the final design where the detail was required. Annotations were often weak, with few students explaining all the features in their design. However some very good clear designs were seen, with excellent annotation. To gain higher marks candidates must include all measurements and properties for the range of features that would be used. A very few candidates gained full marks by showing exactly how all the pages were to be laid out and explaining all the features.

Item (h)

Most candidates provided clear screen shots showing all the files of textual material and image files necessary to complete the examination task, as required. Screenshots that show only folders of image files are not sufficient to gain the available mark.

Item (i)

Those candidates who carefully chose what screenshots to include were able to clearly point out the range of features used and explain most of them in the context of the newsletter pages. They were then able to relate the software facilities used to the audience, thus gaining high marks. Fewer candidates achieved the sixth mark as their explanation did not show sufficient understanding of fitness for purpose. A minority did not show their template(s) before content was added, and had not annotated the features used in the template itself.

Item (j)

The majority of candidates were able to show how their work was composed and were able to cross reference all their text and images to their research files. These candidates were awarded five marks. Those who were also able to demonstrate appropriate development of their newsletter gained the third mark. Candidates should avoid taking screenshots of every stage of development but choose a few significant points that clearly show how the pages were composed and the decisions made to improve their presentation. The cross referencing is best shown by labelling screenshots of the completed pages to show the files used for the text and images. References to the original sources are not required here.

Item (k)

In this series the assessment of this item also included the quality of written communication in the pages produced. The quality of written communication assesses the candidate's ability to use correct, clear English with good spelling and punctuation, as well as presenting the work in a way that is fit for the purpose and intended audience. This was assessed over the whole content and layout of the newsletter pages. In addition, the candidate's understanding of the issues posed by the task was assessed in this item. The issues that should have been identified by the candidates were:

- a range of examples illustrating the benefits the members could obtain by using ICT systems
- an explanation of what restrictions the Computer Misuse Act and copyright legislation place on the use of ICT.
- advice on how to overcome any drawbacks when using ICT

The full range of marks was seen.

Work varied widely in the quality of written communication and understanding of the issues posed by the task. To score high marks candidates needed to demonstrate a good understanding of the issues and the requirements of the task, use good English with appropriate vocabulary to explain their points and present their work appropriately for the target audience.

It was evident that most candidates had researched the topic well and suggested many ways in which ICT can be used by senior citizens. A good range of examples was seen. These included

- social networking; Skype and email,
- Internet shopping, bookings and banking,
- NHS Direct,
- using the internet for researching a wide range of topics such as gardening, recipes, patterns and family trees, keeping up-to-date with the news, downloading music, playing bingo and watching missed TV programmes.
- computer games such as the Wii and brain teasers,
- digital photography,
- satellite-navigation systems,
- using word-processing to write letters and spreadsheets to keep track of accounts,
- chip and pin, reward cards and travel smart cards.

The benefits for the target audience were often less well understood, or poorly explained, and perceptions of the target audience, as shown by the written content, varied considerably. A few

candidates produced newsletters that read like technical manuals rather than pages for senior citizens and so gained fewer marks than those whose writing style was more appropriate.

Several candidates gave good advice on how to overcome drawbacks. Most candidates were able to describe the Computer Misuse Act and copyright legislation but many did not explain the restrictions that these place on the use of ICT.

Many candidates did not accredit their sources, which is necessary to access all the available marks.

Item (l)

The quality of evaluation produced by candidates was very variable. Most candidates scored at least two of the three marks available. Those candidates who were also able to comprehensively evaluate their set of pages and clearly demonstrate how the newsletter produced was suitable for audience and purpose gained the third mark. Candidates who had given clear and appropriate evaluation criteria in c) were normally able to gain higher marks.

Item (m)

Nearly all candidates were able to evaluate their own performance and described how they overcame problems, gaining one mark. Only a few referred back to item (j) in order to illustrate how these problems were overcome, as required in the Candidate Booklet. Fewer still gave a clear and complete evaluation of their own performance in sufficient detail to gain the third mark.

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

Item (o)

Most candidates produced screenshots of their files in Controlled Conditions, but many did not make it clear which files contained their research material, instead annotating their finished documents. What is required to gain the mark available is to show any additions or amendments made to the original list of research text and image files. If no additions were made then a screenshot of those used, with a statement to that effect, was sufficient to gain the mark.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion.