



**General Certificate of Education (A-level) Applied  
June 2011**

**Applied Information and  
Communication Technology**

**IT08**

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

**Unit 8: Project Management**

***Report on the Examination***

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## Unit 8: Project Management (IT08)

Generally, where projects undertaken had real clients, candidates produced better portfolios. It was evident that most candidates had used real clients for their work in this series and were thus able to access higher marks.

Action plans and monitoring of tasks showing durations in hours were evident in most candidate portfolios, though predicted deadlines for project tasks were still missing in some portfolios where only start and end dates for tasks were given. Where this was evident candidates were not able to access all the marks available for this criterion.

This Unit introduces candidates to the skills, techniques and tools involved in managing a project (or part of it) and working as part of a project team. A broad spectrum of projects had been carried out, from planning parties to setting up websites, providing teaching resources and organising trips. The emphasis of assessment is on the processes that occur whilst carrying out the project rather than the end product itself, which allows for some projects not coming to fruition until after the end of the unit of work. In these cases no end product was evident apart from the results of the planning phase. This was perfectly acceptable.

AO1 assesses the candidate's acquisition of new skills during the project and whether they were pro-active in their acquisition; their use of new software or software functions during the project; their use of project management tools and standard ways of working.

In some portfolios, although it was highlighted that the software or software functions were new to the candidate, they had not described how they had used them in their own work which is necessary to gain higher marks.

Most candidates appeared to have a good grasp of what it means to work in a team, on a project, and had obviously done so.

A few projects chosen were unsuitable for this unit. These projects were instances where, for example, a whole team had worked to produce only a simple spreadsheet solution or a PowerPoint presentation. Most candidates did show evidence of real, appropriate projects that they had undertaken.

Unfortunately there was evidence that, in some instances, candidates had been taught "to the mark grid" and were producing evidence of skills/knowledge gained or used in the project, with no real understanding of their relevance to the individual candidate's role/tasks.

Some of the evidence for candidate's giving support to team members put too much emphasis on "teaching something" rather than passing on relevant and necessary skills to a fellow team member, who would then use those skills in the project. Where candidates had achieved high marks they had usually given support to a team member on a relevant skill and included an authenticated record of the support given, complemented by signed, tailored feedback from the other team members and teacher.

In many portfolios there was too much emphasis solely on gaining/developing new "soft" skills throughout the project, and not enough evidence of technical IT skills, relevant to team work, that had been developed.

Many candidates had used a variety of alternative project management tools. For example there were some good uses of Facebook as well as distribution lists for emails, tracking of changes made to documents held in areas with shared access, series' of related agendas and minutes, on-line shared document storage and well monitored Gantt charts. However many candidates had failed to gain the higher marks because they had not described or shown how they had used these tools effectively, appropriately and consistently in their own aspect of the project. A few projects sampled had incorrectly identified email as a project management tool and thus gained no credit.

When providing evidence of adherence to standard ways of working many candidates provided evidence of backing up their work and using appropriate file names as well as some evidence of using

standard ways of working appropriate to group work. A consistent approach and adherence to both personal and group-work standard ways of working should be evidenced.

In A02 most work sampled this series, showed good evidence that candidates had both communicated with team members and acted upon communication from other team members. This was predominantly provided by candidates whose meeting minutes showed action points allocated to them, as a team member, which had been followed up at the next meeting.

Although most candidates described their role and tasks in the project in detail some candidates, especially where teams were too large, had problems in describing exactly what they were going to deliver and their role as a team member.

In A03 many candidates had produced good evidence of their own personal involvement in problem solving, but sometimes they failed to show how they had responded to unexpected events, though most work sampled showed good contingency plans for unexpected events.

Not all candidates provided detailed plans of the ICT they planned to use in their own part of the project (in the future tense) and some failed to then provide evidence of how and where the ICT had been used.

A few better portfolios showed good enough evidence for three marks on each of rows 5 and 6, where candidates should explain their existing skills and knowledge prior to commencing the project, and how they have used these in carrying out their tasks and role in the project. Many candidates did not achieve high marks on these rows because they described their pre-existing skills and knowledge but did not then show how they had used these whilst working on the project (in the past tense).

In A04 better candidates gained higher marks for clearly showing how their projects and their own part in the project were to be assessed. They did this by providing some objectives and evaluation criteria for the team in respect of the overall project, and themselves in respect of their own individual role/tasks in the project. These candidates then provided a plan of how they would assess their success or failure by explaining how these would be measured for example by test plans for projects, user/client questionnaires and peer feedback. Some better candidates gave clear accounts of the actions taken by other team members and themselves during the project through diaries/logs.

## **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](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion).