**General Certificate of Education (A-level) Applied
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Applied Information and   **IT01**
Communication Technology

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

Unit 1: ICT and Society

Report on the Examination

Unit 1: ICT and Society (IT01)

General comments

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

Candidates demonstrated a keen interest in the topic and most carried out extensive research into both their audience and into ICT systems and adaptations that would assist them. However, some candidates paid insufficient attention to the wording of the task, giving advantages and disadvantages of the systems they presented rather than explaining how these systems would give the person an improved quality of life, as required in the brief.

It was pleasing to see that many students had learned to present their evidence using a sensible number of well selected screenshots with suitable commentary, and so gained good marks in these items.

A few candidates inappropriately 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 are sufficient to show 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 written 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 must not be included.

The quality of written communication was assessed in item k). Those students who gained good marks in the item showed that they thoroughly understood the audience and the issues involved in the task, explained clearly how their examples can benefit the reader and presented their work in a way that was appropriate for the audience. In some cases the font style and/or colour combinations made work difficult to read. In these cases the candidates gained few marks.

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 supplement for people with particular needs explaining how ICT can be used and adapted to provide them with an improved quality of life. They were also asked to include an explanation of one piece of legislation that people need to be aware of 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 they did not write comments that showed they were monitoring their progress against the plan and to explain changes to the plan. Instead they gave descriptions of what work they had carried out. Candidates using Gantt charts must ensure that they clearly show both planned and actual time periods with a suitable key and annotations.

Item (b)

This Item requires the candidate to:
- o   describe the audience
- o   do sufficient research to find out what they would like
- o   draw conclusions regarding audience needs in terms of layout and content.

Most candidates were very clear about whom their audience was, had interviewed some people with particular needs and recorded their results thoroughly. Some candidates had talked to people who cared for others with particular needs or who taught them, and had gained excellent insight through this. A reasonable number of candidates gave a very good account of the characteristics of people with particular needs and were able to demonstrate a good understanding of the affect of the needs of the audience on content and layout. These students gained 3 marks. A small number of candidates included evidence of using questionnaires, without any explanation of whom they had given the questionnaires to. These candidates did not score many marks on this Item.

Candidates who gained high marks paid particular attention to who might read the newsletter, what they could describe about them, their methods of investigation and their needs in terms of layout and content. They may also have analysed other newsletters that are targeted at the same audience.

Item (c)

The majority of candidates gave some relevant evaluation criteria for 2 marks but most did not cover enough aspects to gain the 3 marks available for criteria that are relevant to the scenario and suitable for assessing both purpose and audience. 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.

Item (d)

A significant number of candidates lost marks for using only the internet for their research, or because they did not follow the guidance for writing a bibliography in the Candidates'

Booklet, or sometimes both. Those who recorded that they had used more than one type of research, and who followed the guidance, gained three marks.

Item (e)

Many candidates produced sketches that were well annotated and included some notes about the suitability of the designs for the audience and so gained two marks. Those who had clearly shown, in their designs, understanding of both the target audience and purpose of the pages gained all three marks.

Item (f)

The majority of candidates were able to demonstrate that they had tested their draft designs, gaining the first mark. Those who clearly used members of the target audience or their carers/teachers for their testing and had then drawn conclusions from their testing were awarded both available marks.

Item (g)

Some very good designs were seen. Most candidates had annotated their design features but fewer had explained why these were appropriate for audience and purpose. In order to gain higher marks candidates must include, and explain, all details of features including text and layout properties, measurements and an indication of the content that would be used. These designs should be able to be used by a third party to produce the newsletter.

Very few candidates gained full marks by showing exactly how all the pages were to be laid out and justifying all the features for audience and purpose. Some candidates had produced unnecessarily detailed draft designs but did not put this detail into the final design where this detail was required and would have gained them marks.

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)

The majority of candidates provided good evidence of the use of a number of software facilities and related them to the purpose and audience. Those who gave detailed explanations of why the facilities were chosen for these newsletter pages and this particular audience gained high marks.

Item (j)

The majority of candidates appeared to have been well prepared, were able to succinctly show how their work was composed and clearly cross referenced their text and images to their research files. Those who were also able to demonstrate appropriate development of their newsletter and had referenced all their text and all their images gained the six marks

available. Candidates are expected to save their textual research in a series of appropriately named files. It is then much easier to show where they have used their files of research in their pages. A few students inappropriately took screenshots of every stage of development making it very difficult to see the important stages.

Item (k)

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 candidates were expected to:
- cover a range of particular needs
- provide a range of examples illustrating how the use of ICT systems can improve the quality of life for people with these needs
- provide a range of examples illustrating how ICT systems can be adapted for people with these needs
- give an explanation of one piece of legislation that people need to be aware of when using ICT.

The full range of marks was seen and candidates approached the topic from many different angles. Although the task was open to interpretation the bulk of candidates addressed the needs of the disabled, in particular those with sight or hearing loss. There was also good work on dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorder, physical disabilities and the needs of the elderly.

Most candidates had clearly researched the topic well and suggested many ways in which ICT can be used and adapted by people with particular needs.
Examples included
- Social networking, texting, Skype and email for the hearing impaired
- Internet shopping, bookings and banking especially for restricted mobility
- Screen magnifiers for the visually impaired
- Concept, large key and colour-coded keyboards
- Braille keyboards and output
- Hearing loops
- Voice to text systems
- Screen readers/text to voice systems,
- Head pointers, sip and puff systems

Most candidates had clearly gained an insight into the lives of some people with particular needs and were able to appreciate the need for clarity in their newsletter supplements when considering the audience and creating their designs. However they did not necessarily put this into practice when creating their pages. The articles that gained most credit were those that explained complex examples in clear and concise language appropriate to the target audience.

Most candidates were able to describe a piece of legislation but few were able to explain how it applied to the audience.

Many candidates did not accredit the source of each text article and each image, in order to gain all three marks for this part.

Item (l)

The majority of candidates scored at least two of the three marks available by appropriately evaluating their pages, usually with reference to their evaluation criteria. However most did not gain the third mark as they had not provided an overview of the newsletter, in order to evaluate the purpose, but concentrated solely on proving the criteria were met. Those candidates who produced a comprehensive evaluation and clearly demonstrated how the newsletter pages were suitable for audience and purpose gained the third mark.

Item (m)

Nearly all candidates were able to evaluate their own performance and/or described how they overcame problems for the first mark. Only a small number illustrated how they overcame problems by referring to item j), as required in the Candidate Booklet, for the second mark and very few 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, confusing them with the items h) to o). 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.