Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2012

Applied GCE 6955

Unit 5 – Web Development

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the world's leading learning company. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk for our BTEC qualifications.
Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

If you have any subject specific questions about this specification that require the help of a subject specialist, you can speak directly to the subject team at Pearson.
Their contact details can be found on this link: www.edexcel.com/teachingservices.

You can also use our online Ask the Expert service at www.edexcel.com/ask. You will need an Edexcel username and password to access this service.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere
Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

General Comments

The entry for this double award unit is small. Eportfolios with marks across the range were seen and, although there were few in the high 40s and 50s, some of these were of a very good standard. The majority of centres had assessed the evidence realistically. However, it was disappointing to note weaknesses in some centres which suggested that previous moderator reports to the centre and also the Principal Moderator's reports for this unit had not been taken into account. This means that comments on weaknesses observed are similar to those in past series.

In addition, centres are able to seek further guidance and clarification through the Ask the Expert service.

One major aspect which impinges on student evidence is the use of a client. Few candidates produced convincing evidence that liaison with a client had been undertaken to produce the evidence for this unit. There needs to be explicit evidence that a client was used, not just weak references to "my client". A teacher or some other appropriate person can role play the part of a client. This is essential if 5.1 of the unit specification is to be properly addressed and enable all the marks across the strands to be accessible.

There is still evidence that Assessors are awarding marks across all strands based on the standard of the website produced and not the requirements of each individual strand.

Candidates supplied the websites created which is correct practice. There was evidence relating to all strands but often the processes behind the production of the website were poorly evidenced. There is still a lack of understanding of difference between design, implementation and prototyping and what evidence is appropriate for strands b and c.

Comments on strand (a)

Most candidates produced project plans in **graphical format** which is a requirement in order to access this strand. It is good to see a large number of candidates using project management software which is best practice. Other candidates used spreadsheet software which is acceptable for this AS unit. Those candidates producing Word tables and DiDA type action plans were not able to access the marks in this strand. A few candidates had used Excel but neglected to produce a project plan (Gantt chart) and just produced a list of tasks which is not correct.

Many of these had been awarded marks in the higher mark bands although there was no real evidence to support the plans having been used to produce the website.

Some plans did not appear to have been produced at the start of the process. Many did not have realistic timescales or include the aspects listed in 5.2 of the unit specification. It was disappointing to see many included the evaluation and proposal, which is not required, but then neglected to

state the date the website would be handed over to the client. This has been pointed out in previous reports. The agreed handover date of the completed website to the client should be clearly stated in the plan and updates.

The comments made in previous Principal Moderator Reports are still relevant:

"Few candidates evidenced the use of the plan throughout the implementation of the websites which is required in order to access all the marks in MB1. The best evidence is updating the plan and including the different versions in the eportfolio complete with annotation explaining updates. Project logs/diaries and minutes of meetings with the client can all support the use of the plan.

To access all the marks in mark band 1 there should be evidence the plan was used to monitor progress throughout the project period. This refers to the design and implementation of the website up to and including the handover to the client.

Candidates accessing mark band 2 need to produce detailed plans addressing 5.2 of the unit specification and demonstrate good use of it throughout the project period.

Candidates accessing mark band 3 should have included realistic contingency time in their detailed plans and demonstrate effective use of the plan and updates throughout the project period."

Comments on strand (b)

More candidates are producing evidence for both aspects of this strand but there are still many candidates being assessed too generously for the evidence produced.

The lack of a proper client impacts on the marks for this strand. Very often there were gaps in the evidence required and marks had been awarded in mark band 2 and above, when a mark in band 1 or bottom of mark band 2 was more appropriate.

Candidates are required to research client requirements at the outset of a project gathering information and analysing requirements.   A variety of research techniques should be evidenced if accessing marks in the higher mark bands.
Very often the use of a client was not clear and candidates were often following set headings. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a more independent approach to their assessment evidence for this AS qualification.

5.3 indicates the topics to be researched and brought together in a Requirements Analysis document which, ideally, is written as a report for the client. Some candidates analysed competitive websites well and based design ideas on their research. However, other candidates analysed some websites that bore no relation to the proposed client's needs.

Very often there was a blank questionnaire and no real profile of the client.

Many designs were well presented but contained little detail and were many repetitive pages of similar layout. Other designs were poorly drawn scanned in images which did not address 5.4 well. Some candidates had screen shots of the final website which is not correct. The designs should be well presented and reflect the research carried out to establish the client needs. A good range of features should be included and detailed.

The structure diagram was usually produced to a satisfactory standard. The flow charts are still poor and often taken from unit 2 rather than showing the main user pathways through the site.

Comments on strand (c)

Once again most of the marks were allocated to the website produced and there were instances where that was the only evidence produced for this strand. In fact there are 3 distinct areas, the prototyping of the design, the actual website and testing.

The prototyping was very poorly evidenced with few candidates including convincing evidence that proper prototyping had been undertaken. Good prototyping is a form of formative testing and addresses aspects of 5.1. To access all the marks in mark band 1 there should be evidence of some prototyping to improve and refine the initial design. Too often this consisted of cosmetic changes, ie colour, and weak reference to "my client". Better candidates had clear evidence of meetings with the client with explanations of changes required, with before and after screen shots. To access the higher mark bands there needs to be evidence of user feedback which, ideally, is the target audience. There was little evidence of screenshots showing the changes made. Before and after screen shots would do this.

The standard of websites produced varied in quality. Candidates included the websites in their eportfolios which is a requirement for this strand. The final website should be clearly labelled as such and functional (fully functional for mark band 3). Some evidence had been placed in mark band 3 although a very limited range of software skills was demonstrated – 5.8 of the unit specification has a suggested list. Although there were some excellent websites produced, there were also a good number of very poor examples that did not reflect the progression expected of candidates on an AS course undertaking a Web Development unit.

Pages of repetitive content is not required. Fewer pages demonstrating more skill in the use of html and software tools is a more effective way of evidencing this strand. To access mark band 3 it is expected a good range of features be included in the websites, such as multimedia content, interactive components, simple animations, replacement text for visually disabled access.

Those candidates who had provided evidence that they had prototyped the design often also included evidence of prototyping of a working model

through to final model, clearly utilising comments from the client and/or target audience. This evidenced formative testing well. More candidates produced evidence of summative testing and some of this was well done and addressed most of 5.6. The weaker candidates seemed to concentrate on buttons and links which really only supports the limited testing required for mark band 1.

Some websites demonstrated little adherence to standard ways of working. The quality assurance of the content was not always undertaken with uncorrected errors, pictures not displaying. Few candidates evidenced legislation and codes of practice with the acknowledgement of sources and respect of copyright.

Few candidates produced explicit evidence they understood the basic principles of HTLM and were able to modify and edit HTML code. This is expected for the higher marks band to support good use of software tools. However, it was good to see some of the better eportfolios had evidenced 5.5 well which is part of the requirements of mark band 3.

Comments on strand (d)

The evidence for this strand is improving and the assessment reasonably accurate. There is still a tendency for candidates to write a narrative of what they had done rather than evaluate the performance (does it work) and functionality (does it do what the client wanted) of the website created. Some candidates clearly did not understand the difference between performance and functionality. Very often feedback was listed but no reference made to this in the evaluative comments although, often, marks in mark band 2 had been awarded. Candidates who referred to testing and prototyping and made reference to the feedback received from others, eg target audience, addressed the performance of the website effectively. Likewise, the candidates who evaluated the website against the original client needs addressed functionality well. Still some candidates are evaluating their own performance and, sometimes, the eportfolio, which are not requirements of this strand.

There were some instances of candidates trying to combine the evidence for d and e which is incorrect. These 2 strands have very different requirements. There needs to be a separate evaluation addressing strand d in the eportfolio for marks to be awarded for this strand.

Comments on strand (e)

The majority of candidates addressed this strand better and the assessment was more realistic.

Most candidates presented the evidence correctly, i.e. a Proposal addressed to the client in an appropriate format. The best evidence was in the form of a professionally presented report.

Most recommendations were sensible and related to the website produced for the client. However, some candidates recommended an enhancement for

functionality from the list for 5.7 but chose something that was not relevant to the client's needs and website created, eg an ecommerce site for a client who has nothing to sell.

Some candidates produced very similar evidence across a cohort which did not always relate to the site created and appeared to be following the same headings.

Few Assessors mentioned Quality of Written Communication in the feedback on the esheets for this stand.

Comments on Administrative Procedures

Most samples were received by the stated deadline and correct documentation was provided, ie candidate authentication sheets and esheets. Some of the esheets were not named using the file naming conventions specified in the Guidance for Centres: Moderation of ePortfolios document which can be found on the Applied GCE ICT section of Edexcel.com.

There were some centres which did not send candidate authentication sheets and these had to be chased by the moderator. Candidate authentication sheets are essential to the moderation process.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx