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Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCE in Applied ICT (6964) Paper 01 Programming

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General Comments

It was nice to see most centres submitting the sample required on one disk and including the e-sheets and candidate authentication sheets all labelled according to the correct naming conventions as detailed in the document "Moderation of ePortfolios: Guidance for Centres". Many candidates' eportfolios were in the correct file formats, within the stated file size of 25 MB and most contained a clear index file which started the eportfolio. It was good to see many assessors giving clear feedback in the e-sheets explaining the assessment decisions made and marks awarded. See the section on admin at the end of this report which details some poor practice relating to the submission of work for moderation.

It was pleasing to see that the majority of centres were assessing to National Standards with sound assessment decisions made across the board. Centres/assessors clearly understand what is required and how to apply the mark bands for this unit.

There were very few instances of centres adopting a very structured approach with all candidates producing very similar evidence this window which is excellent.

The majority of candidates had included a copy of the functional specification which really did make moderation easier as the moderators had something to compare the program against.

However, there are still instances where executable versions of the programs are not being included. It is imperative that the moderator can access this. Also, occasionally the exe files did not run properly – usually down to absolute paths to files etc. Candidates should ensure relative paths are used.

Comments on Strand A

It was nice to see that very, very few candidates included what they had done here as opposed to what they were going to do. However, it is worthwhile reiterating that screenshots of the final system are not design and that it is the level of detail within the design that leads to the mark band placement. For the top of the higher mark bands the design needs to be detailed with, at mark band two, explanations of how input data will be validated and at mark band three identification of the processing to be carried out in each event. At times Assessors were generous in relation to the evidence of the use of global variables and the use of a suitable variety

of selection and iteration structures and other complex features, as these could not always be found where marks and assessment comments indicated they were present. This also applies to the effective use of controls and events – at times the evidence did not show this very clearly, especially where there were problems getting the programs to run and supporting documentation was not detailed. Please take note of the comments given in strand B regarding programs that are of a simplistic nature.

Comments on Strand B

There were very few instances of simplistic programs being included this moderation window and some very good examples of systems that could well be classed as 'professional level'. However, it must be pointed out once again that simplistic programs that appear to meet the strand criterion if a 'tick box' approach is used are not acceptable. Programs have to be of appropriate complexity to open up all of the mark bands. Very simple programs will limit the marks available in strands A to D to mark band 1.

Standard ways of working are important in this strand. With regards to programming code this includes good use of object names, indentation and comments clearly explaining the purpose of the code. There was some excellent, clear evidence of this but not across the board and it is very important.

Please take note of the comments made with regards to global variables etc in strand A too as it also applies to this strand.

Comments on Strand C

Please see comment given in strand B with regards to programs of a simplistic nature. On the whole evidence for this strand was good with some very detailed test plans and results including changes made etc.

Comments on Strand D

Please see comment given in strand B with regards to programs of a simplistic nature. On the whole the evidence for this strand was good ie both documents had been included and assessors were correctly awarding marks.

Comments on Strand E

It was nice to see that there was very little evidence of candidates being placed in too high a mark band in this strand in this moderation window. Where the higher marks had been awarded most candidates had included an evaluation that was well rounded and included an evaluation of the quality of the user and technical documentation and the efficiency of the final program including data structures.

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