



General Certificate of Education

Information and Communication Technology 2520

Unit 1 Practical Problem Solving in the Digital World

Report on the Examination

2009 examination – January series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2009 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

General

It was pleasing that many centres ensured that their candidates' Sample Work was between 10 and 20 pages and was attached to the script with just one treasury tag. This enabled candidates and examiners to find the relevant work with ease. However some candidates did submit many more than 20 pages, which caused a problem for those candidates as they had too much to look through to find the relevant work. Where candidates had completed two complete pieces of practical work including both the requirements specification and testing for both, this disadvantaged those candidates.

It was also pleasing to see that most candidates attempted all questions on the examination paper.

Candidates did not always relate their answer to the context of the question, which affected the mark attained. This was particularly noticeable in questions 5e, 6b and 7.

Centres are reminded to read this report in conjunction with the section in the specification where the expectations of candidates performing at grade A and E is described (Appendix A, pages 33 to 35).

Question 1

This question was well answered by the majority of candidates.

Question 2

Those candidates who used a good example frequently gained full marks for this question. A good answer given was "A client is the person who requires a solution to a problem. My client is Mr Jones, who has asked me to produce a website. The users will be his staff, who will update the website and the audience, the people who the solution is aimed at, will be his customers who will view the website."

Question 3

- (a) This question was reasonably well answered with the majority of candidates gaining at least 2 or 3 marks of the 4 available. It was surprising how many candidates did not appear to know the name of the devices pictured.
- (b) Most candidates gained at least 1 mark and understood that this type of device provides portability.
- (c) Many candidates gave two disadvantages of using the device and scored 2 marks in this question, but few showed any real understanding of the disadvantages. A good answer would have been "As these devices are small, they can be easily mislaid accidentally and valuable data could be lost".

Question 4

Most candidates gained at least half marks and better candidates did explain how the functionality had actually helped them to complete the task effectively. Many candidates could not gain marks on this question because they merely listed the functions (functionality) available within word processing software and gave no explanation.

Question 5

(a)/(b) Many candidates showed their understanding of the Sample Work and gained high marks in parts (a) and (b). Some candidates because they failed to follow the instructions on the exam paper and either did not annotate the page number in the answer booklet, or they failed to annotate their Sample Work with the question number. This meant that examiners were unable to identify whereabouts in the Sample Work to look for the requirements.

Some candidates stated two requirements for part (a) but instead of selecting one of these for part (b) went on to describe the inputs, outputs and processes in relation to a different requirement, which may or may not have been in their Sample Work. It was difficult to ascertain the reason for this, but candidates should always read the whole question before attempting to answer any part of it.

- (b) This question was particularly poorly answered by some candidates who were unable to identify any input, process or output associated with the requirement they had identified in part (a).
- (c) Many candidates gained full marks in the question, although some others had failed to identify the user's skills within their Sample Work.
- (d) Some candidates answered this question very well, showing a good understanding of the testing they had carried out. These candidates did go through the process of describing one test in detail with its purpose, specific test data, expected and actual results and gained full marks. Conversely, some candidates answered in very general terms, some by simply listing several tests they had performed gaining little credit.
- (e) Few candidates gained high marks in this question, referring to the accuracy and presentation of output and how they had tested it. Some candidates failed to answer the question as they did not refer to the accuracy and presentation of **output**, writing in very general terms of "formulas" and "functions" without giving detail.

Question 6

- (a) (i) This question was frequently well answered. Most candidates gained at least 4 marks showing a good understanding of how to design an input screen; the better candidates included items such as a screen title, the date, customer details, product details, navigation and submission buttons in their designs which gained them full marks.
- (ii) Some candidates gave good answers such as, 'I would include a drop down list for the customer's title, so the user has a limited number of options and cannot enter invalid data'.

Other candidates' answers were vague and simply stated they had used a drop down list without explaining how the feature used in the design minimised errors or ensured accurate and valid data entry.

- (b) Most candidates scored some marks on this question. The better candidates did well, offering good answers relating to alternative input methods, media and devices that could be used for entering the data from the order forms.

However some candidates didn't seem to understand the terms media and devices and/or failed to relate their answer to the given situation.

Question 7

Very few candidates gained high marks for this question. Many veered away from the topic concerned. Where candidates had related their answer to output methods, devices and media, high marks were gained as they answered the question well and in context; other candidates gained few marks as they wrote about features of the software and input devices, showing little understanding and a lack of knowledge of output methods, media and devices.

The standard of English seen in some answers sometimes made it difficult for the meaning to be understood. Candidates should be reminded that their quality of written communication is an integral part in the assessment of the answer to this question.

The instructions to candidates on the front cover of the examination paper stated that 'Question 7 should be answered in continuous prose. In this question you will be marked on your ability to: use good English, organise information clearly and use specialist vocabulary where appropriate'; this was reiterated at the end of question 7.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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