



General Certificate of Education

Information and Communication Technology 2520

Unit 2 Living in the Digital World

Report on the Examination

2009 examination – January series

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General

It was pleasing to see that most candidates attempted all of the questions on the examination paper. Candidates generally used their time wisely, showing good preparation of them by centres, and did not appear to have spent too long on the section A questions to the detriment of the longer section B questions.

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 one of the section B questions, this being highlighted in the instructions to candidates on the front cover of the examination booklet.

Candidates did not always relate their answer to the context of the question which affected the mark attained. This was particularly noticeable in questions 2, 3 and 5.

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 was answered well by most candidates with many candidates gaining full marks. Some candidates wrote everything they could think of about an ICT system. Alternative sample answers which would have gained credit are illustrated in the mark scheme; some candidates answered with a combination of these.

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates correctly identified batch processing as being appropriate but few went on to explain why it was appropriate in the context.
- (b) Again many candidates identified transaction processing as being suitable but few explained why in the context of internet banking.
- (c) This was answered less well than the other parts of the question, with few candidates gaining both marks.

Question 3

- (a) Candidates often provided little more than a simple identification of a threat, failing to describe the threat in the context given. Candidates who provided three threats did identify at least one that was internal and one external. Some candidates gained full marks on this question by providing good descriptions.
- (b) Many candidates gained full marks for this question by clearly describing measures the family could take to protect their network. The weaker answers did not make reference to the context of the question.

Question 4

Generally this was not well answered, with some candidates finding it difficult to distinguish between the World Wide Web and the Internet. The better candidates demonstrated their understanding that the Internet is a collection of linked networks (of hardware) and the WWW is the collection of multimedia information hosted on the Internet.

Question 5

- (a) Better candidates answered in the context of the question relating their answers to the job description for the IT Technician explaining why each personal skill would be essential for that job. Some candidates clearly distinguished between good written communication skills and good oral communication skills and gained marks for both. Some candidates incorrectly described technical skills, such as the ability to learn about new software packages, rather than personal skills.
- (b) (i) Some candidates failed to gain marks by identifying either an IT Technician or IT Manager which were stated in the question. Marks were awarded for either a job title or for a description of a role undertaken by an ICT professional. If a candidate failed to identify an appropriate ICT job in (b)(i) no marks could be gained in (b)(ii)
- (c) Where candidates had described the characteristics of effective ICT teams some good answers were seen with examples that clearly illustrated the characteristic. However, many candidates incorrectly described individual personal characteristics of team members, or failed to provide examples illustrating the characteristic. Examples of appropriate answers can be seen in the mark scheme.

Question 6

- (a) Candidates put different interpretations on what was meant by an 'older' user, with some considering this was anyone older than themselves. The better candidates correctly described some of the personal characteristics of older users, such as failing eye-sight, arthritis and poor hearing, that they would need to consider and then suggested how to tailor the user interaction accordingly. Others recommended particular applications to incorporate in the phone to meet the needs of the older user or conversely suggested applications that they would not include, and were not actually explaining what needed to be considered.
- (b) (i) Only the better candidates answered this question well. Many candidates often suggested a GUI because it is *easy to use* or it is *user-friendly*. And did not explain why a GUI is particularly appropriate for the older user.
 - (ii) To gain full marks candidates needed to explain why more than one type of user interface was not suitable.
- (c) The term 'particular needs' was interpreted as widely as possible in this question. Some candidates interpreted the younger person with particular needs as referring to a person with a physical impairment, and correctly suggested changing the interface to accommodate users with poor eyesight or hearing problems. From another point of view, if the candidate stated that younger people might need the same interface characteristics as older people because their needs were similar then this was given credit. Other candidates discussed the general needs of younger people, such as the need for a shortcut to the camera or MP3 player, as it is a feature used more frequently by younger people. Again this approach was worthy of credit. It should be noted that the question asked for changes to the interface rather than changes to the type of interface. Candidates who failed to note this did not perform well on this part of the question.

Question 7

A full range of marks was seen here.

This question addressed the section of the specification that refers to factors affecting how ICT is used rather than the section outlining the consequences of the use of ICT. Many candidates' answers showed that they had not appreciated the difference between the two. Allowance was made in the marking for this and as good examples were frequently used, and these candidates still gained credit.

Many candidates were unsure what was meant by issues which were Cultural or Social, and Ethical or Legal. Social Factors were probably the best understood.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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