



General Certificate of Education

Information and Communication Technology 2520

Unit 2 Living in the Digital World

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

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General Comments

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

Question 1

This question was generally well answered.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to complete the list with the components as stated in the specification (*People, Procedures, Software and Information*). Some repeated one of the items already given in the list and could gain no credit for that item.

Question 3

Many candidates did not score well on this question with part (a) being the best answered of the three parts. The question was looking at whether candidates could understand and justify why a particular type of processing is used for a particular application. Some candidates answered this by justifying why the application was used rather than the type of processing and could not gain credit.

Question 4

A large number of candidates gave responses to the question 'How is the environment affected by ICT?' rather than the question as it appeared on the paper. Some allowance was made for this. Many responses mentioned reuse, recycle and refill but few candidates seemed to have any idea why these were important or what they actually meant. Most candidates were able to gain credit by referring to the fact that the use of computers generates a large carbon footprint because of their power consumption.

Some did, however, read the question and describe ways in which the use of ICT is changing in order to make less effect on the environment. Examples worthy of credit included paperless offices, power saving features on monitors and bringing recycling in at the design stage so that less landfill is needed.

Question 5

The question did clearly state 'away from the home and their workplace' but there were still a significant number of candidates who wrote about using wireless networks in the office environment. A significant number of those who did answer the question correctly couched their answers in terms of mobile Internet dongles, clearly a current topic, and often made very valid points. Problems such as a diminished signal the further away from a wireless router you move were correctly discussed. Some candidates incorrectly thought that wireless networks are more prone to viruses than cabled networks. Rarely did candidates correctly mention that the risk of the wireless signal being *intercepted* was greater.

Question 6(a)

This question was generally well answered with the high scoring candidates making reference to a range of different user characteristics.

Some candidates had clearly not read the whole question before starting to answer part (a) and described the interface as opposed to interaction.

Question 6(b)

Very few candidates actually explained why a GUI enabled effective communication, but simply stated some features of a GUI.

Question 6(c)

More able candidates were able to provide good answers to this question such as hand-held or trolley mounted scanners, information screens/kiosks and on-line shopping and the ways in which these improve customer satisfaction.

Question 7

In this question the better candidates were able to write about what ICT can provide together with examples of this provision in context. Many took up this theme and discussed such things as making use of the 'vast storage capacity' and the 'improved presentation of information'. These answers usually scored the highest marks because they had a framework to guide them.

Question 8

Many candidates failed to relate their answers to the context given in the question providing inappropriate suggestions for backup and security.

Some candidates wrote very vague statements with no real examples or discussion. Email was the aspect of communication most written about. Most candidates had some idea of either methods of communication or security issues, but only the best candidates actually put the two together and wrote a comprehensive essay covering both points of discussion. Frequently on the communication side, all of the methods were discussed in the context of communicating with friends and family, and the newspaper's requirements were ignored.

The best answers were from candidates who had planned their work before writing their answer and had applied their knowledge to the given situation.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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