



General Certificate of Education

Information and Communication Technology 2520

Unit 3 The Use of ICT in the Digital World

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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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 is described (Appendix A, pages 33 to 35).

The examination consisted of two parts: Section A - structured questions based on pre-release material; and Section B - questions requiring extended answers. Centres are reminded that all candidates should be familiar with the pre-release material supplied to them prior to the examination. This material should be used as the basis for further study and the content investigated thoroughly.

Question 1

Many candidates found this a straightforward question and gained maximum marks. Some candidates misinterpreted "ICT strategy" for "ICT system" and provided answers based on tactical issues such as maintenance, security and user involvement, which did not gain credit.

Question 2

Many candidates had carefully considered the development success factors contained in the Specification and consequently gained high marks. Others had approached the question from the system life cycle viewpoint and were able to gain reasonable marks based on analysis, design and testing with suitably expanded answers. There were frequent references to maintenance, support and training but no marks were available for these factors, as these are post development activities.

Question 3(a)

Generally, this was answered well, with many candidates gaining full marks. However, some candidates spent too much time writing about the advantages of external service provision but failed to explain the ICT Director's concerns, such as loss of staff control, data security issues and the quality of the external service provided, as required by the question.

Question 3(b)

The question required candidates to **describe** outsourcing and, although some gained full marks, many answers consisted of lists of advantages and disadvantages but omitted the descriptive content required by the question and thus were unable to gain all the marks on offer.

Question 4

Candidates were able to identify areas of inadequacy, gaining marks for this part of the question. Candidates' answers included valid improvement measures to the security policy, with better definitions of responsibilities, password content, password renewal, physical security, and backup and recovery. However, few candidates achieved maximum marks for this question, as many were unable to adequately identify or describe how measures could be taken to improve the security policy.

Question 5(a)

The better candidates achieved maximum marks for this part of the question. However, others struggled with the question and, for the “level of detail” column, appeared to believe that strategic levels required high levels of detail when, of course, the opposite is the case. Others seemed unsure of what was meant by “purpose” and just copied the stem of the question into the column this gaining no marks for repeating what was in the question.

Question 5(b)

Although the question required the candidate to **name** and **justify** appropriate training methods, many candidates named methods but failed to provide the required justification. Consequently, few marks could be gained, although the better candidates generally achieved full marks.

Question 6

This question covered testing as described in Topics 8, 9 and 10 of the Specification. Whilst most candidates had some knowledge of testing and gained marks, only a minority provided the full range of testing techniques required for testing a “large ICT system” and the requested explanation of the terms used.

Question 7

There were some excellent answers. The more able candidates discussed the impact of entertainment and social interaction technology upon organisations, providing a balanced view of the positives and negatives of these changes. Typically, these candidates demonstrated their knowledge and understanding by providing a range of contemporary examples of how organisations had adapted to utilise entertainment and social interaction technology.

This question differentiated the candidates, as many confined their answers to discussions about entertainment and social interaction without making the link as to how organisations’ operations have changed as a result. To achieve the high mark range described in the marking scheme, candidates needed to **analyse**, and not just describe, how the entertainment and social interaction technologies impact upon organisations.

The examiners were impressed by the variety and wide range of examples used by candidates. These included the use of text messaging by health practices (to remind patients of appointments) and descriptions of how organisations sometimes use social networking sites for advertising.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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