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ICT (Specification 2520) INFO1

Unit 1: Practical Problem Solving in the Digital World

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

It was pleasing that many centres ensured their candidates' Sample Work was between 10 and 20 pages and was attached to the script with just one treasury tag, thus enabling candidates and examiners to find the relevant work with ease.

Centres are reminded that candidates should **not** submit:

- more than the recommended 20 pages
- Sample Work that contains duplicate evidence for each item required
- sections on design, implementation and evaluation.

All of the above disadvantage candidates because they have too much to read through to find the relevant work.

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

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) and the example answers in the mark scheme.

Question 1

A small proportion of candidates scored full marks in this question; unfortunately some candidates did not relate their answer to the question asked and incorrectly just wrote what they knew about health and safety.

Question 2

The majority of candidates answered this question well, with many gaining full marks. A good answer included three examples of storage media and the appropriate uses for them.

Question 3

This question was well answered with the majority of candidates scoring at least half of the 4 marks available.

Question 4

A large number of candidates gained at least half marks. Better candidates were able to explain the functions of an operating system; the weaker candidates simply stated the functions without explaining them.

Question 5

It was pleasing to see an increased number of candidates showing their understanding of the practical work undertaken during their study of this unit and gaining high marks. However, where requested, a number of candidates did not gain high marks for this question because they did not follow the instructions in the question paper to either write the page number in the answer booklet or to annotate their Sample Work with the question number.

Question 5(a)

Some candidates did not gain high marks for this part because they either did not annotate the page number in the answer booklet, or they failed to annotate their Sample Work with the question number. Most candidates were able to identify one user of their solution and describe how that user would use the system.

Question 5(b)

Better candidates gained high marks for this part as they were able to explain what is meant by a client and an audience and they gave examples. The client explanation tended to be better than candidates' explanation of the audience.

Question 5(c)

Some candidates did not display input/process/output clearly in their Sample Work, some of the Sample Work lacked detail and some candidates did not understand that the inputs would include data. This did not enable them to show their understanding of what they did in their Sample Work.

A high number of candidates gained at least half marks for this question with the full range of marks being awarded. Some candidates gave answers that did not include an explanation of how and why the data identified was needed to create the outputs and therefore did not gain a mark in the high range.

Question 5(d)

Better candidates were able to show their understanding of testing by describing two tests, specifying test data they had used and by describing what the result showed about the solution that they had tested. Some weaker candidates that gave two relevant tests were not able to describe them in sufficient detail to show their understanding.

Question 5(e)

Overall this question was answered well. Candidates showed their understanding of the need to find the error, fix it and retest.

It was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates scored at least 2 out of 3 marks on this question.

Question 6

This question was answered well by many candidates. Better candidates related their answer to both validation and verification, although some did not and therefore could not be awarded full marks.

Question 7

On the whole better candidates wrote very good answers to this question without veering from the topic concerned, showing a good knowledge and understanding of the features/functions of hardware and software. Many candidates failed to score more than half marks, as they just gave lists of types of software and/or hardware, without mentioning features/functions and did not give any explanation of why they were useful.

The majority of candidates gained more than half marks reflecting the accessibility of the question which gave them the opportunity to draw on their own experience.

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

Centres are reminded that 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'.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results statistics page of the AQA Website.