



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
January 2011**

**ICT
(Specification 2520)**

INFO4

**Unit 4: Coursework: Practical Issues Involved
in the Use of ICT in the Digital World**

Report on the Examination

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General

This was the third session that INFO4 work was submitted for moderation. The project reports seen were generally well presented and included evidence for all sections.

Solutions had been developed by the candidates to a good range of original problems; included those where policies, websites, spreadsheets and database management systems were developed as the solutions.

It was pleasing to note that teachers at nearly all centres made good use of the marking grid provided by AQA. For each row on the grid many teachers indicated the mark obtained, often provided a page reference where the evidence could be found and a brief commentary as to why a mark had been awarded.

Thank you, the moderation team found that this information really aided the process of moderation.

Background and Investigation

Most candidates provided a full introduction to the organisation investigated that included the type, purpose and size of the organisation, and the scale of operation. Unfortunately some candidates just used an investigation technique(s) to collect evidence and did not then use the information they found to support the conclusions from their investigation.

Analysis and Deliverables

Most candidates attempted to state the scope of their project, but did not clearly identify exactly what areas their solution was to cover in order to fulfil the client's requirements.

Most candidates described their proposed system, identified deliverables, processes and users' skills that would inform the subsequent design process. Unfortunately some candidates omitted to provide evidence to show that their findings had been checked by their client.

Most candidates included qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria that showed some understanding of how their solution should be assessed. It was pleasing to see that some candidates had cross referenced their evaluation criteria to the client requirements set out in their Background and Investigation sections.

Design

Some candidates just discussed the different types of software available rather than providing alternative design solutions to the problem under investigation and could gain little credit. Any discussion needs to clearly relate to the problem being solved and should include methods and style of solution, choice of hardware and software, and procedures to be adopted. Better candidates objectively considered alternative design solutions in relation to their client's requirements.

Most candidates provided a design but in order to gain good marks there needs to be evidence that the design has been amended in the light of specific comments on that design from the client. Few of the reports seen included an explanation of how the design met the client's requirements.

The development plans presented by the candidates varied in quality, better candidates' plans included clearly identified steps for implementation, testing, installation/introduction and training, the best plans clearly related to the candidate's client's requirements and the agreed deliverables. Agreed deadlines and expected durations also need to be included for each part of the plan. Whilst Gantt and Pert charts can be useful, they must contain sufficient detail to be meaningful for the reader.

Centres should remind candidates that their plan should show the timeline for the solution being developed not for the production of the student's own project report.

Some candidates test plans consisted of many functional tests and no planned testing to show that both their client's requirements and their evaluation criteria have been met. Centres are reminded that, as stated in the specification, evidence of functional or unit tests is not required so there is no need to show this type of testing as part of the test plan.

Testing and Documentation

Most candidates included evidence of testing their solution. However, centres are reminded that the specification states 'Testing should concentrate on the testing of complete processes and the system as a whole.' Many candidates showed testing of the processes included in their system but very few provided evidence to clearly show that the whole of their solution had been tested.

The documentation produced should be that agreed with the client, and as it is part of the system developed, it should be tested by the users that it was produced for to ensure it is appropriate for their needs and it meets the client's requirements.

In order for a candidate to demonstrate that the documentation provided is appropriate (or not) for the people who are going to use it, the candidate should review the results of the testing done with the documentation and draw conclusions that can be justified from the evidence provided.

Evaluation

Most candidates attempted to evaluate their solution and the evaluations seen were well structured but not always cross referenced to supporting evidence.

Report

Most candidates provided a well-structured report that made good use of the software available.

Centres are reminded that electronic templates must not be provided to be used for the candidates' reports as marks are available to the candidate for the organisation and structure of the report. Both teachers and candidates can use the specification and marking grids as guides to the required content and structure of the report.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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