

GCSE

Edexcel GCSE

Business and Communication  
Systems (1504)

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Summer 2005

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Examiners' Report

Edexcel GCSE  
Business and Communication Systems  
(1504)

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## Examiner Report 1504/01 & 02 - June 2005

Candidates performed in line with previous series on the Foundation and Higher papers. Generally candidates appeared comfortable in the use of the pre-prepared files and in one area in the Foundation paper (detailed below) candidates appear to have benefited from the use of previous papers. Both papers differentiated well and as expected.

Centres are reminded that a hard copy of the pre-prepared files **must be** included with scripts when sent to the nominated examiner. As last year, a surprising number of Centres did not do this. The purpose behind this requirement is to ensure that candidates are not unfairly penalised as a result of incorrect data entry in the pre-prepared files. The first task for each examiner is to check the hard copy of the pre-prepared files against a master copy. If there are data errors then these will be taken into account when marking the work of candidates from that Centre.

There was no evidence that candidates ran out of time. The quality of the work seen at Foundation and Higher level was good although there were some weaknesses in knowledge that are detailed below. Candidates appear to have had been more sensible in their use of time for this series and to have allocated appropriate time to each task, as recommended in the report for the June 2004 series.

Examiners continue to report that some Centres present them with unnecessary work because of the method of attachment that they use for printouts. Centres are requested, as they have been in each report, to place the printout in the correct place, ie against the question and wherever possible to use treasury tags. Too many Centres continue to place all printouts at the start or the end of the paper and many Centres are still not physically attaching printouts to the question paper.

Centres should continue to note that it remains the intention of the Principal Examiner to fully utilise the specification in the design of future papers. The accurate transfer of data remains important and candidates should be made aware of this. Possible areas for development include a reduction in the number of pre-prepared files and precise instructions with regard to layout and format.

### Foundation Paper

#### Q1

This question worked well for the majority of candidates with many gaining virtually all the marks available. Where marks were lost it was generally due to candidates' inability to follow the instructions they had been given. The most common errors for this question were transcription - primarily capitalisation, transposition of dash/hyphen, alignment and right justification of both columns. Few candidates displayed all of these errors.

## Q2

Although both tasks had been set in earlier papers, very few candidates gained all the mark available for this question.

The business letter showed some improvement in that few candidates left in the italics from the pre-prepared file and most candidates included all the information required by the task. The most common errors seen were mainly linked with an apparent lack of the basic knowledge relating to the layout of a fully blocked and open punctuated letter. Evidence for this was not including the name of the business, the use of a superscript 'th' in the date, punctuation outside the main text of the letter and a failure to match the salutation and close. Few candidates gained the accuracy mark.

Candidates performed well on this question. However, few gained all the marks available. The main reason for this was either the failure to give a title to the chart and/or not labelling the vertical and horizontal axis.

## Q3

This question was not well answered with most candidates not being capable of presenting an organisation chart with four levels.

Candidates had a major difficulty with Tess Moss, the Office Manager. It was a rare printout that had her correctly positioned. Some candidates presented lists rather than an organisation chart. Candidates often found it difficult to show the link between directors and other roles.

## Higher Paper

### Q1

See comments for Question 3 on the Foundation Paper.

### Q2

This question, for most candidates, split into two distinct sections. Most candidates were capable of including the required information in the body of their letter and carrying out, accurately, the required calculations. However, there were too many basic errors relating to the presentation of a fully blocked and open punctuated letter - a requirement of the specification. The errors already indicated above in Question 2 of the Foundation paper were also seen in this question, although to a lesser degree.

### Q3

This is the first time that a question of this nature has been set and it was rewarding to see that most candidates made a good attempt at answering it. Some candidates made use of templates but then did not make the template fit the requirements of the question, often by not including the company address and details that were readily available to them.

The most common errors were not to clearly indicate a space for the delivery address and a failure to include unit total boxes.

## Examiner Report 1504/03 & 04 - June 2005

Candidates performed well on both the Foundation and Higher papers. The context did not seem to pose any problems and some excellent scripts were seen - some scoring full marks.

Many candidates however are still failing to read questions carefully enough. They do not actually look at and think about their answers and whether these answers relate to the question asked.

Throughout both papers candidates are advised to note the buzz words in questions - explain, analyse, discuss, why, suggest, compare. Apart from give, identify, list, name and state, it is expected candidates will produce expanded answers otherwise they are unable to reach higher levels.

Once again candidates are advised to produce some kind of plan to assist them in the last question on the higher paper.

### Foundation Paper

#### Q1(a)(i) - (vi)

'chronological' was probably the least well answered otherwise these did not seem to cause candidates too many problems.

#### Q1(b)

Answered well by the majority of candidates with no one response causing any particular difficulty.

#### Q1(c)(i)

Breach of security was misinterpreted by many candidates who outlined security systems required to prevent a breach of security rather explaining what breach of security meant.

#### Q1(c)(ii)

Many candidates did well in submitting a list of security measures to protect computers from theft and some attempted to develop/expand their answers. 'Explain' requires candidates to attempt more than a list of statements by perhaps linking the statement with phrases like 'which means' and 'because'. Those candidates submitting a list could not move to the next level.

#### Q2(a)(i)

Some good answers were seen but generally candidates only demonstrated basic knowledge. Very few candidates achieved level 2 as they did not manage to explain how the available facilities would help. Many discussed graphs and tables despite being told not to in the question.

#### Q2(a)(ii)

Generally well answered with clear explanations of relevant benefits.

**Q2(b)**

Not well answered with many candidates presumably reading no further than the stem of the question giving explanations of security measures to protect data but nothing about back-ups. Some candidates did mention back-ups on floppy disc and CD rom but again many missed the second part of the question, the importance. This meant not many achieved level 2.

**Q2(c)**

Not done particularly well and very much on a centre by centre basis. Either candidates knew what revision control was and answered well or they did not. Admittedly this is not a major topic in the specification.

**Q3(a)(i) (Foundation-/01)**

**Q1(a)(i) (Higher-/02)**

Well answered at both foundation and higher level with efficiency and safety emphasised by many. Better calibre answers were seen on the higher level paper though many candidates at both levels were achieving level 2 with their sound analysis.

**(a)(ii)**

Some good understanding and valid judgements made on the likely reactions of staff - both positive and negative - to the training. Some of those who achieved level 2 equated the importance of skills with promotion opportunities.

**(b)(i)**

Generally well done at both levels with many candidates gaining level 2 and full marks. The most common error was where candidates did not relate their answers to health and safety.

**(b)(ii)**

Many candidates were aware of their responsibility to other workers and the need to report unsafe equipment. However this varied from centre to centre with some candidates more knowledgeable than others on employee responsibilities.

**Q2(a)(i)**

Generally well done with much evidence of good knowledge of payment methods. There was confusion over direct debit and standing order and some confused direct debit with debit cards. Very few did EDI. Most did cheques and in the main did them well though some candidates failed to mention the bank's role in the transfer of funds.

**Q2(a)(ii)**

This was well answered and there were many good judgements of the pros and cons of internet banking thus gaining level 2. When a question asks 'why' it is expected candidates will evaluate and make judgements.

**Q2(a)(iii)**

Most candidates reached level 2 with answers largely confined to hacking and its effects on Julia's account.



**Q2(b)(i)**

The majority candidates understood piece rate though some were unsure of the term.

**Q2(b)(ii)**

Quite a number of candidates explained the benefits to the employees without linking these to Badge Identity Ltd. Many answers tended to stress the motivation to work hard without expanding into how this would be an advantage to the business.

**Q3(a)**

A popular answer which was well answered. A lot of good quality, comprehensive answers seen with evidence of planning and the ability to make judgements about the benefits thus reaching level 3 and full marks.

**Q3(b)**

Some students misinterpreted or misunderstood the question here. Some discussed and showed great knowledge of types of LAN which was acceptable if they gave the advantages and disadvantages and made a recommendation but some failed to do this and merely described LANs at length. Some discussed WANs and the internet which really did miss the point. Some candidates got carried away in explaining the advantages and disadvantages and consequently forgot to give recommendations which meant they could not get beyond level 1. Many candidates did though give excellent answers giving advantages and disadvantages and weighing these up to make supported and justified recommendations which reached level 3 and gained full marks. Quite a few of these answers showed evidence of planning which led candidates logically through their arguments resulting in really good answers.



## Moderator Report 1504/05 - June 2005

Overuse of the internet continues to be a problem for some candidates, especially those who make no effort to disguise what they have done. This work is unlikely to access AO3 and AO4 and candidates doing this will struggle to reach the higher levels of AO2. Too many candidates make ineffective use of knowledge from textbooks and for some candidates the inclusion of what is little more than copied notes does not aide them in achieving criteria they are probably capable of achieving.

Centres that have attended training sessions tend to be much more accurate in their application of the criteria and the work of their candidates will generally show the benefits of such training courses in terms of the problem that has been set and the presentation of the coursework in a report format.

Annotation was generally much improved for this series. Only a few cases of no annotation at all were reported. For most candidates annotation was at the point of award and Centres are thanked for this. Centres are politely requested to make sure that any criterion that is given throughout is placed on the front page of the coursework.

A few administration problems remain. The most common will bear repetition and they are the failure to double the raw mark and add 4 for QWC, a mismatch between the criteria indicated on the Record Sheet and those found in the coursework and a failure to complete the authenticity statement on the Record Sheet by both the teacher and the candidate.

This report continues to conclude with the section that indicates the nature of the criteria and highlights those criteria that often incorrectly awarded or not awarded at all. No excuse is made for its repetition as it is again based on the reports of Assistant Moderators.

1.2 Candidates are simply asked to list their sources of knowledge. It is a constant surprise that even the best candidates often fail to gain the criterion. At its simplest it can be a list containing at least two separate sources. A bibliography on its own is insufficient as that is only one source ie texts. The other three are people, organisations and electronic. The candidate who writes:

Ms A N Other, my Information Studies teacher (*people*)  
Understanding Business by R Branson (*text*)  
Tesco plc (*organisation*)  
<http://www.bized> (*electronic*)

will have covered all four sources and **identified** each.

1.6 Where the word **consider** appears in the criteria (1.6, 1.7, 2.4, 3.6, 4.4, 4.6) it is expected that candidates will show that they have thought about and not just described, for example, influences in 1.6. A simple sentence that just states or describes an influence is insufficient for this award.

1.9 Where this is awarded for *make comparisons* then there must be actual comparisons and not just a description of two pieces of knowledge.

- 2.7 This criterion requires candidates to do three things: (i) recognise strengths, and (ii) differences then (iii) make decisions. Usually it is (iii) that is absent. It should be noted that each is in the plural
- 2.9 The expectation is that candidates will have submitted an Action Plan which sets out the tasks they have to complete, where they will get their knowledge from, deadlines and explanations of how they will monitor such a plan and justifications for deviations from their original intentions.
- 3.4 This criterion is still being under-awarded by many Centres.
- 3.7 There must be clear evidence of the system that the candidate has used to gather from a wide range of sources. Often awarded when 1.2 was not observed or awarded which is not possible.
- 4.7 Candidates can only gain this award if there is **both** evaluation and possible improvements indicated: again note the plural.
- 4.8 To achieve this award candidates have to do **three** separate things. They must (i) produce the detailed evaluation, which must contain (ii) suggestions for improvements and such suggestions, must be (iii) justified.
- 4.9 The effects, whether economic, social or environmental must be linked to the candidates' work.

Centres are reminded that there is a full programme of training arranged for 2004-2005 and details of this have been sent to all Centres.

# Statistics

## Practical paper 1 - Foundation Tier

|                   |           |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Grade             | Max. Mark | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  |
| Raw boundary mark | 45        | 27 | 23 | 19 | 16 | 13 |

## Practical paper 2 - Higher Tier

|                   |           |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Grade             | Max. Mark | A* | A  | B  | C  | D  |
| Raw boundary mark | 45        | 36 | 32 | 28 | 24 | 20 |

## Theoretical paper 3 - Foundation Tier

|                   |           |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Grade             | Max. Mark | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  |
| Raw boundary mark | 63        | 28 | 23 | 19 | 15 | 11 |

## Theoretical paper 4 - Higher Tier

|                   |           |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Grade             | Max. Mark | A* | A  | B  | C  | D  |
| Raw boundary mark | 63        | 51 | 44 | 37 | 30 | 22 |

## Coursework paper 5

|                   |           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |
|-------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| Grade             | Max. Mark | A* | A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G |
| Raw boundary mark | 76        | 69 | 59 | 49 | 39 | 31 | 23 | 16 | 9 |

## Notes

**Maximum Mark (Raw):** the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

**Boundary mark:** the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.





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