



General Certificate of Secondary Education

**Information and Communication
Technology
3522 Full Course
*Specification B***

3522/F

Foundation Tier

Report on the Examination

2007 examination - June series

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General

Most candidates attempted most of the questions on the paper. There were some excellent answers showing a good breadth and depth of knowledge at this level. Answers to the multiple choice and short answer questions met with significantly greater success than those questions requiring diagrams or more extended written answers. A very few candidates made too many or too few choices in the multiple choice questions, for example, candidates made three choices when only two were required, thus reducing the maximum number of marks that could be awarded for the question.

When answering the questions on the written papers, some candidates gave the answers 'quicker', 'cheaper', 'easier', 'neater', 'more powerful', 'makes fewer mistakes', 'it could breakdown, etc. without further qualification, and credit was not given for these simplistic answers. More successful candidates explained, what is 'quicker', why it is 'quicker', what are the consequences because 'it could breakdown', etc. in relation to the context of the question. In addition, one word answers were not usually awarded a mark when a short description or explanation was required. Similarly, no marks were given for repeating the question without elaboration, and vague, repetitive or inaccurate answers. Better answers related well to the context of the question, were detailed and accurate, used appropriate technical language, and had illustrative examples. Where marks could not be given for a weak explanation or a vague description which lacked technical accuracy, it was not uncommon for candidates to be awarded marks because they had given a good example. Diagrams were often poorly labelled and not well drawn.

The marking of the Foundation paper was computer based (e-marking). Whole written scripts are scanned and saved in electronic form, and each clip (subsection of a question) is marked separately. Each clip is marked in one of three categories: auto, general and expert. Auto marking is particularly appropriate for multiple choice questions; general marking for short answer questions and diagrams requiring a straight forward response; and expert marking for more complex and extended answers. At the end of the marking period an audit of the e-marking process was carried out to ensure its accuracy. As a result of the e-marking process, item level analysis of candidates' responses is practical. The comments on specific questions are grounded in the judgement of the Principal Examiner; however, these are underpinned by reliable and accurate statistics.

Comments on specific questions:

Question 1

Most candidates answered most questions well with the exception that on 1dii and 1f a significant proportion were awarded no marks. These were the only sections in question 1 where candidates were not presented with a range of answers to choose from and instead were required to write a short sentence. In 1dii, popular incorrect answers were a hyperlink and an e-mail address; that is, objects that are likely to be embedded in an e-mail rather than attached to it. In 1f, popular misconceptions were that zipping a file improves security and helps protect it from viruses.

Question 2

Most candidates answered most questions well. On most questions the majority were awarded full marks with the exception that on 2a most candidates were awarded two out of three marks: popular correct answers were 'A date' and 'A number' accompanied by an incorrect answer. Popular incorrect answers were 'A website' and 'A word processor'. Most candidates answered 2c and 2d incorrectly suggesting that candidates do not have a secure understanding of spreadsheet formulae. In 2d most candidates recognised that the main security threat to data on a memory stick was the loss of the memory stick but just under half could not clearly describe a valid means of improving security.

Question 3

Most candidates answered most questions well. In 3b, most candidates recognised www.pqrest.org.uk as a valid website address but were unable to identify a second valid address. A popular incorrect answer was <http://www.pqrest.gov.uk>. In 3 c ii, a wide range of creative responses were given; however, some answers were too vague to be awarded a mark, for example, 'the public', 'adults' or 'people browsing the web'. In 3 f, most candidates were not awarded full marks and this was often because answers were too brief or not expressed in ways which were sufficiently meaningful, for example, 'delivery'. Many candidates incorrectly believed that when an item that is delivered is faulty it is not possible to return it.

Question 4

Most candidates answered most questions well. In 4c and 4d, many candidates were awarded full marks but a similar number were awarded only part marks; however, there was no clear pattern of incorrect responses. In 4fi, most candidates answered correctly although some incorrectly believed that music in MP3 format would be of a better quality than music on CDs. In 4fii, the overwhelming majority of candidates were awarded no marks with very few giving correct and well expressed answers which demonstrated that they know that it is illegal to re-sell CDs and retain copies.

Question 5

Most candidates answered questions 5b and 5c correctly. In 5a, most candidates did not answer correctly and in full. This suggests that candidates do not understand the basic ICT systems life cycle that is also the basis of the coursework. In 5di, very few candidates achieved full marks with almost half of candidates awarded no marks. Many candidates could not draw a diagram of a basic LAN topology and most drawings lacked sufficient clarity. Some candidates did not include other hardware.

In 5dii, most candidates were awarded no mark with a significant minority showing little understanding of the question.

Question 6

Most candidates answered questions 6a, 6b, 6fii and 6g correctly. In 6c, most candidates were awarded at least two marks with popular incorrect choices being the second and sixth options. Many candidates were awarded no marks in 6d. There were a wide range of creative

suggestions for improvements many of which would not have improved the accuracy of the control system. In 6e, many candidates knew that the purpose of a username and password are to prevent unauthorised access. Some candidates gave answers that were not sufficiently clear to be awarded a mark. In 6fi, most candidates did not know that passwords are changed regularly so that when an unauthorised person finds out a password the time they can access the system is limited. Most incorrect answers to this question stated that it makes it harder for an unauthorised person to discover the password.

Question 7

Most candidates answered most questions well. In 7biii, over half of candidates answered incorrectly. Many candidates identified only one selected record which was insufficient for a mark. In 7d, most candidates were awarded only one mark; however, there was no clear pattern of responses.

Question 8

Most candidates answered most questions well. In 8dii, few candidates were awarded a mark. Many incorrect answers suggested a lack of familiarity with such systems and answers went well beyond what is currently available and possible. In 8eii, few candidates were awarded a mark. Answers often repeated the question. The most common theme in answers awarded a mark was invasion of privacy.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade Boundaries and Cumulative Percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website