

Information & Communication Technology B

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE 1995**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **GCSE 1095**

Report on the Units

June 2008

1995/1095/MS/R/08

OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations) is a unitary awarding body, established by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate and the RSA Examinations Board in January 1998. OCR provides a full range of GCSE, A level, GNVQ, Key Skills and other qualifications for schools and colleges in the United Kingdom, including those previously provided by MEG and OCEAC. It is also responsible for developing new syllabuses to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers.

This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this Report.

© OCR 2008

Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications
PO Box 5050
Annesley
NOTTINGHAM
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622
Facsimile: 01223 552610
E-mail: publications@ocr.org.uk

CONTENTS

General Certificate of Secondary Education Information and Communication Technology B (1995/1095)

REPORTS ON THE UNITS

Unit/Content	Page
Chief Examiner's Report	2
2378	3
2379	6
2380/01: Foundation Tier (Written Examination)	8
2380/02: Higher Tier (Written Examination)	11
Grade Thresholds	13

Chief Examiner's Report

General Comments

Standards have been maintained overall although coursework continues to improve, often at the expense of the examined component. This is particularly evident in full course candidates. Judging by the questions where poor answers were given, a significant number of candidates appeared to have been ill prepared for the written examination component or are being inappropriately entered at the higher tier.

Teachers need to ensure that candidates are appropriately entered. Inappropriately entered candidates often expressed themselves poorly in the written component of the exam. Such candidates may have a better opportunity to fully demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, and achieve higher grades, if they are entered for an appropriately demanding tier.

Teachers need to ensure that candidates are equally prepared for the written examination component of the course. It is important to ensure that candidates are able to demonstrate capability in all of the components of the qualification in order to raise overall standards.

Candidates achieving the higher grades had a balance of good coursework and technical knowledge required for the written component. For the full course adequate preparation based upon the pre-release material is essential. Centres allowing staff to attend INSET and as such to explore both coursework marking and examination research with senior examining personnel, particularly for candidates undertaking 2380 were clearly at an advantage.

In general terms many candidates still resort to software brand names instead of using generic terms. Candidates must also focus their answers upon the context given. When answering the questions on the 2380 written paper, some candidates gave the answers 'quicker', 'cheaper', 'easier', 'makes fewer mistakes', without further qualification, and credit was not given for these simplistic answers. 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.

More successful candidates explained, what is 'quicker', why it is 'quicker', what are the consequences in relation to the context of the question.

Digital submissions of coursework continues to grow but still at a slow pace. There was no sound recorded evidence this session.

For the first time this year, the marking of the paper was computer-based. The written scripts are scanned and saved in electronic form, and each item (subsection of a question) is marked separately.

2378

General Comments

Candidates following this course were guided to submit coursework based on the use of ICT in the Travel Industry, in line with the guidance provided at INSET.

The vast majority of Centres followed either the E-ticket or a Wage Slip scenario or one of the sample assignments linked to advertisements found in the 'Approved Specification'.

Most Centres had taken more notice of the 2nd paragraph of 7.1, Marking Criteria for Internally Assessed Work on page 40. "Each successive statement builds upon the previous statement and candidates must have completed the lower statement before they can be awarded the next mark range."

In general, the standard of marking and internal standardisation by Centres for summer 2008 was of a high standard.

Although a number of issues did arise :-

Digital Submission

Not many Centres submitted work on disk. I was hoping that by now, more Centres would be submitting work on a different media than paper.

Annotation

Most Centres used the Front Cover Assessment Sheets giving the page numbers where evidence could be found. This helped with cross-referencing and aided the moderation process.

Some Centres gave extra annotation within the coursework portfolios, and this was greatly appreciated by the moderating team. Some annotation or indication where tutors are allocating marks benefits both the candidate and the moderator.

Although annotation is not essential, its use is greatly appreciated and aids the moderation teams and is an example of best practice.

Arithmetic errors

A small number of Centres had different marks on the MS1 form (the form sent to OCR to record candidates marks, and the form used by moderators to select their sample), to the mark on the Cover Sheet of the candidates work.

Before posting the coursework sample to moderators, Centres are reminded to double check that the mark on the MS1 is the same as the mark allocated to the candidate on the Front Cover of the coursework portfolios.

MS1s

When completing the MS1s, Centres need to ensure that the intended mark is clear on the copy sent to the moderator.

Quite often Centres had written on the MS1 while resting on other pages, making the whole MS1 impossible to read, or they had not put sufficient pressure on to ensure that the moderators copy was clear enough to request a fair sample. Again, this slowed down the moderation process.

Marking Criteria

A small number of Centres had not used the OCR published marking criteria on pages 40 – 43 of the approved specification. Centres should not make up their own mark schemes, as this could harm their candidates results.

Communication Mark

Most candidates should be gaining at least one mark for the communication mark. Some Centres were being too harsh and awarding zero marks for candidates who should have been given some credit.

Assessment Objective 1

Choosing and Describing Applications

Candidates performed well, the level of evidence for this section is getting better with every session.

Using Hardware & Using Software

Again, the level of evidence suggested some very good teaching and learning; most candidates reached the higher mark threshold.

Inputting Data

Most candidates were in the 2/3 mark threshold. Candidates still need to give more evidence as to how their designed system reduces the possibility of data errors. Although there is now evidence of this being put right.

System Output

Depending on the assignment chosen, not all candidates were able to describe alternative outputs or the benefits and drawbacks of each.

Assessment Objective 2

Analysis

Possibly the most important aspect of coursework. Candidates who performed well here tended to perform well throughout the Unit. When done well, candidates maintained their focus and knew exactly what they were designing and why.

Design, Implementation, Testing

Centres should remember that the lower order marks relate to the Analysis and the candidate's ability to identify and complete their ICT system.

Most candidates performed well, but to secure the highest marks candidates should annotate their own work giving reasons as to why changes have been made, why some designs have been retained and others discarded.

Some Centres were very generous in awarding marks for AO2b without any of the above evidence. These Centres often had their marks adjusted.

Evaluation, Application and Effects

This was again the weakest aspect of coursework. Candidates did not compare ICT with other methods, or justify when and why using ICT is more appropriate.

Documentation

This could be improved by stating who the User Guide is aimed at. That will then focus the candidates into the type and detail of guide needed e.g. is it for the worker, client or patient.

AO3

A number of candidates did not attempt this AO. Those candidates, who did, attempted this in various ways. Some had tried to meet the criteria within other reports, whereas some gave this a discrete section within the coursework. Moderators reported that those Centres who tried the former found annotation more difficult to follow.

If candidates identified the person/people who would benefit from their system, then again this focuses the candidate to meet the marking criteria.

AO4

Again, those candidates who scored well on "the use of ICT in the wider world" did so using a discrete section of coursework.

2379

General Comments

Most candidates designed a multimedia presentation, either an interactive website brochure or brochure using Power Point for a Travel Agent.

Submitting the same work for 2378 & 2379

Although it is possible for candidates to submit one portfolio for both 2378 & 2389, candidates **MUST** identify where the extension task begins.

The full portfolio can be assessed for the 2378 mark, but only the extension task can be assessed for the 2379 mark. Therefore, it is possible for these candidates to get different marks for 2378 & 2379.

If the extension task is not clearly identified then the whole of the portfolio will be assessed as 2378 only.

Producing a System

Moderators look for a complete working system, and Centres should be encouraged to send in digital evidence of websites rather than paper based portfolios. It is becoming apparent that some Centres are producing more and more reports. Moderators look at work using the marking criteria not volume of work.

Centres should be encouraging their candidates to show more flair in their design and working system.

Assessment Objective 1

Choosing and Describing Applications

In the main candidates performed well. Although only a few candidates commented in detail on the benefits and drawbacks of a selection of different types of hardware and software that could have been used, for the 4/5 mark threshold.

Using Hardware & Using Software

Again, candidates performed well. Although some candidates did not describe the benefits and drawbacks of their chosen hardware very well.

Inputting Data & System Output

Candidates linked these sections together and provided some excellent evidence.

Overall, the performance at AO1 level was greatly improved from the previous session.

Assessment Objective 2

Analysis

Candidates who performed well here tended to perform well throughout the coursework. When done well, candidates maintained their focus and knew exactly what they were designing and why. Overall, those candidates who scored highly had put in a lot of work into this section. Probably more than the 5 marks merited but candidates benefited in the final mark.

Design, Implementation, Testing

Most candidates performed well, but to secure the highest marks candidates should annotate their own work giving reasons as to why changes have been made, why some designs have been retained and others discarded.

Some Centres were very generous in awarding marks for AO2b without any of the above evidence. These Centres were more likely to fall outside of tolerance and have their marks adjusted.

Evaluation, Application and Effects

This was the weakest aspect of coursework. Candidates did not compare ICT with other methods, or justify when and why using ICT is more appropriate.

Documentation

Candidates performed well here; there was some good evidence of testing and refining user guides.

AO3

Candidates attempted this in various ways. Some tried to meet the criteria within other reports, whereas some gave this a discrete section within the coursework. Moderators reported that those Centres who tried the former not only found the annotation more difficult to follow, but in some cases, the Centre had not given the candidate their full credit.

Candidates need to link their discussion of AO3 to their task; some are too generic to score in the top range. If candidates identified the person/people who would benefit from their system, then this focuses the candidate to meet the marking criteria.

AO4

Those candidates who scored well on “the use of ICT in the wider world” did so using a discrete section of coursework.

2380/01: Foundation Tier (Written Examination)

General Comments

The examination paper allowed candidates to demonstrate their ability in this subject, and the questions catered for a differentiation in the level of the candidate's ability. The levels of achievement in this examination were wide ranging, but only a few candidates achieved very high marks.

The majority of candidates were able to gain marks throughout the paper, with no one question proving to be overall well answered or poorly answered.

There was evidence that some candidates are now using correct technical terms instead of using vague words like 'stuff', 'things' and 'something' for which they cannot be awarded marks. This is an improvement on previous examinations, and should continue to be encouraged by all Centres. However, candidates are still referring to possible advantages (question 2a) as quicker, faster etc for which they gain no marks. Centres should impress on candidates the importance of not using such vague terms.

In general, candidates completed the paper in the time allocated, and answered it in a more competent manner than in the past. It is now evident that more candidates now understand what they have to do to gain marks for each question e.g. in question 6 drawing lines to connect the symbol to the task, in question 5 five ticks required, in question 7 three points need to be made in order to gain three marks etc. In a few cases, candidates need to be encouraged by Centres to complete a question as requested. For example, in question 5, some candidates only gave three or four ticks when five were required. If the candidate gives less than the required number of ticks, they should be encouraged to guess the remaining answers as they will not be penalised for giving the correct number of ticks, and may even gain extra marks if their guess(es) are correct. By the same token, candidates should be made aware that they will be penalised if they give more than the number of ticks required.

Candidates did not always read the questions carefully in order to understand what was required in the answer. For example, in question 2 many candidates stated features of electronic communication methods rather than stating advantages or disadvantages.

Candidates were only able to apply their knowledge of the pre-release case study to a few questions such as question 3(c). Questions that were answered well include 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9. Questions which were not answered well include 2(a) and (b), 3(b) and (c) and 10, where more generalised answers were given, rather than those concerning Exotic Holidays.

Centres need to be aware that this examination is now marked on-line and Centres need to stress to candidates the importance of keeping within the frame of the examination page.

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 Most candidates scored at least 5 out of 6 marks with the digital camera being the mark lost. There were a handful of candidates who put more ticks than required and so lost marks.
- 2a) Many responses were too vague as candidates still insist on *quicker, easier* etc. without further qualification. Centres need to encourage candidates to write more appropriate answers. This a repeated problem found in each examination. The answer given was not always from the *company's* point of view.
- 2b) The question was not always answered from company's point of view. Many candidates made reference to computer crashes/viruses/people unable to use computers – these answers should be discouraged as a perfect working system is always assumed. Most candidates achieved 1 mark out of 2. Most common correct answer was *customer needs computer/internet access*.
- 3a) Candidates were able to score full marks for this question provided they did not give repeat answers. Just writing 'computer' needed expansion so did not earn a mark. There was a little use of brand names. A common option given was 'school', 'place of work' or 'office' which amount to inappropriate use of facilities so were not acceptable.
- 3b) Most candidates achieved at least 1 mark out of 3. The most common correct answers were, Advantages: *more up to date* and *quicker than posting etc*. Again, many candidates gave very vague answers e.g. not qualifying quicker than what, more convenient than what? Disadvantages, most common correct answer was customers not having access to the Internet, although too many went down the *Internet goes down/ computer crashes/ virus* route. A perfect working system is assumed.
- 3c) Most candidates managed to score 2 out of 4 marks for this question but few got full marks. The question focussed on booking (not browsing) and the answers needed to be linked to this task. Often the answers made vague references about information and holiday details which could not earn marks. There was not enough expansion and little use of specific examples such as forms, e-tickets, receipts. In some cases the candidate made general comments about using monitors and printers without any reference to the scenario, which did not earn them any marks.
- 4a) This question was poorly answered with the majority of candidates gaining only one or two marks. Many candidates explained the effects of a virus, rather than what a virus is and how the customer's computer can be infected. This question is a very common question in examinations and it was surprising that candidates did not achieve better results.
- 4b) Most candidates achieved 1 out of 2 marks for virus checking/anti-virus software. Although many made vague reference to *downloading files / checking sources* few were able to give sufficient detail in order to gain a mark.
- 5 There were some very well designed questionnaires and candidates were able to score 7 to 8 marks. If candidates did an online form or simply copied the information given as their answer, it was incorrect. The question specifically referred to filling in a questionnaire and then inputting the information which suggests that candidates did not read the question nor follow the instructions given. Some candidates lost a mark for not giving a question of their own. Most common omissions were *title, sufficient space for health details* and *full use of space on form*.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

- 6** Candidates who had the knowledge were able to score the full 4 marks but they were in the minority. The majority of candidates were able to correctly identify *Input* and *Print*. Candidate's lines must be drawn carefully and leave no room for interpretation. Marks are not awarded if lines are unclear.
- 7** This question was generally well answered, with most candidates achieving at least 2 out of 3 marks. A minority of candidates who scored no marks seemed to have misread the question and did not describe the process. Some gave too little or too vague information to earn the marks.
- 8** Very few candidates gained five marks on this question. Candidates should be encouraged to look at the marks allocated for questions such as this and make sure that they only have the number of ticks to match. Many candidates lost marks for too many or too few ticks.
- 9** Candidates who understood spreadsheets were able to earn the full 5 marks for this question. Many lost marks for including the column reference in (a) which asked for the row only. Others gave incorrect cell references. Most candidates seemed to know to use * for multiplication. Candidates are likely to have used spreadsheets as part of their Unit 2 coursework for this qualification. They will also have been prepared for similar questions about spreadsheets as part of their unit 1 examination. It is a pity that candidates seem to have forgotten what they knew. Centres should ensure that this is part of their revision programmes.
- 10** This question appeared to be beyond the level of most of the candidates and was quite poorly done. Many candidates scored no marks. Often answers were general and not unique to the travel company's activities as given in the pre-release material. Not enough reference or understanding of the pre-release material was evident in candidates' answers. Candidates often wrote about cost issues such as electricity/heating rather than environmental impacts. The majority of marks were given for *online catalogue / reduces paper or email / reduces car journeys fewer emissions*. Ways and reasons were marked interchangeably which gave candidates a greater chance of gaining marks.

2380/02: Higher Tier (Written Examination)

General Comments

The examination paper allowed candidates to demonstrate their ability in this subject, and the questions catered for a differentiation in the level of the candidate's ability. The levels of achievement in this examination were wide ranging, but only a few candidates achieved very high marks. In the majority of cases, candidates attempted to answer every question, but some questions were answered far better than others.

Some candidates used vague words for which they cannot be awarded marks. Candidates should be encouraged to use the correct technical terms.

Candidates did not always read the questions carefully in order to understand what was required in the answer.

Candidates need to look at the marks awarded for a question to guide their responses. Candidates need to be aware of the need for full answers. If there are two lines for the answer, then single word answers will not gain full marks.

Comments on Individual Questions

Q1 This question was answered well by most candidate's however still a number of candidates giving brand names. Too many gave web "design" instead of "graphic" for this part of the question; many gave database for analysis, confusing spreadsheets with databases.

Q2a Those who knew the meaning of the words synchronous and asynchronous gained the most marks. There was some confusion between IM and CHAT. Some thought chat meant verbal face to face conversations

Q2c Some did not read the Q and gave advantages of email instead of disadvantages of chat.

Q2d Generally well answered

Q3a A large number of students did not show a title. Some gave an on-screen form.

Q3b Very few knew that incremental backup saved data since the last backup. Few referred to the ancestry backup

Q4a Mostly well answered

Q4b A lot of students gave numerous validation techniques but did not explain their purpose.

Q4c Wrong address/person was the most popular correct answer.

Q4d Mostly well answered, though only a few got full marks.

Q5 A significant number didn't read the Q properly, and gave requirements of the DPA, or listed things like credit card & bank details, address etc

Q6 The majority failed to show a central storage system, so only achieved half marks.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

Q7 Generally well answered.

Q8a Most candidates put the titles and scored at least some of the marks, some gave the right formula but in the wrong place or vice versa

8b A very few mentioned trends. Most referred to averages and best fit, and changes in currency. Hardly anybody mentioned a model.

9 A significant number of candidates lost marks for focusing on the customer instead of the company, i.e. advertising eco-friendly tours. Saving paper was the most popular correct answer.

Grade Thresholds

**General Certificate of Secondary Education
ICT Syllabus B (Specification Code 1095/1995)
June 2008 Examination Series**

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
2377F	Raw	40	N/A	N/A	N/A	37	33	29	26	23	0
	UMS	55	N/A	N/A	N/A	48	40	32	24	16	0
2377H	Raw	40	39	36	32	29	27	26	N/A	N/A	N/A
	UMS	80	72	64	56	48	40	36	N/A	N/A	N/A
2378	Raw	64	63	55	47	39	33	28	23	18	0
	UMS	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0
2379	Raw	64	63	55	47	39	33	28	23	18	0
	UMS	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0
2380F	Raw	55	N/A	N/A	N/A	35	29	23	17	11	0
	UMS	55	N/A	N/A	N/A	48	40	32	24	16	0
2380H	Raw	80	57	50	43	37	30	26	N/A	N/A	N/A
	UMS	80	72	64	56	48	40	36	N/A	N/A	N/A

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (i.e. after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
1095	200	180	160	140	120	100	80	60	40	0

	Maximum Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
1995	400	360	320	280	240	200	160	120	80	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	Total No. of Cands
1095	2.64	15.28	36.00	56.00	68.95	78.99	87.63	94.75	100.00	14,041
1995	3.34	15.86	39.21	64.88	79.49	88.13	94.34	98.13	100.00	8,469

22,510 candidates were entered for aggregation this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:

http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums_results.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

14 – 19 Qualifications (General)

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations
is a Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England
Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU
Registered Company Number: 3484466
OCR is an exempt Charity



OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

© OCR 2008