OCR
RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

GCSE

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 2009

1995/1095/MS/R/09

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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.

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CONTENTS

GCSE Information and Communication Technology B (1995)

GCSE Information and Communication Technology B (Short Course) 1095)

REPORTS ON THE UNITS

2378 Coursework Component

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 2009 was of a high standard, although a few Centres were very poor.

A number of issues did arise:
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 as it aids the moderation process and is an example of best practice. Some annotation or indication where assessors are allocating marks benefits both the candidate and the moderator.

Arithmetic errors

A small number of Centres had different marks on the MS1 form 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 Sheet of the coursework portfolios.

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

Some Centres are being too generous and awarding full marks for all candidates.

Assessment Objective 1

Choosing and Describing Applications

Candidates performed well, the level of evidence for this section is getting better over.

Using Hardware & Using Software

Again the level of evidence suggested some very good teaching and learning, with most candidates reaching 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 reduced the possibility of data errors, although this is improving.

System Output

Candidates are now performing well in this section, and the level of evidence for this section was much improved for this session.

Assessment Objective 2

Analysis

This is a very important aspect of the coursework as 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 candidates 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 whilst 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.

For full marks candidates need to produce evidence of critical thinking, testing and refinements.

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

This could be improved by stating who the User Guide is aimed at. That will then focus the candidates onto the type and detail of guide needed e.g. is it for the employee or customer?

AO3

A number of candidates did not attempt this assessment objective. Those candidates, who did, attempted it 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.

Where candidates identified the person/people who would benefit from their system, it focused them, thereby meeting 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.

2379 Coursework Component

General Comments

Candidates following this course were advised to submit coursework based on the use of ICT to Aid Travel – most used the guidance provided during OCR INSET.

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

Centres had taken 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."

Annotation

Most Centres used the 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 as it aids the moderation process and is an example of best practice. Some annotation or indication where tutors are allocating marks benefits both the candidate and the moderator.

Arithmetic errors

A small number of Centres had different marks on the MS1 form and 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 Sheet of the coursework portfolios.

Digital Submission

Not many Centres submitted work digitally. Those submissions came in various forms, from candidates being filmed while they explained their work to Centres downloading candidates' portfolios to CD Many thanks to those Centres.

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 Working System

Moderators look for a complete and working ICT 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 the quality of the work, not the volume of work.

Assessment Objective 1

Choosing and Describing Applications

In the main candidates performed well. 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, in order to gain the 4/5 mark threshold.

Using Hardware & Using Software

Candidates performed well. 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 summer 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.

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 whilst 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 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 general to score in the top range.
Where candidates identified the person/people who would benefit from their system, it focused them, thereby meeting 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 knowledge and understanding in this subject, and the questions catered for the differentiated level of candidate's ability. The levels of achievement in this examination were generally broad, but only a few candidates achieved very high marks.

In general, candidates completed the paper in the time allocated, and answered it in a more competent manner than in the past.

However, some candidates seemed unable to express their answers in an appropriately rich ICT language making references to 'stuff' or 'something'. It is also a concern that a number of candidates still insist on providing trade names for software in question 6, despite comments in previous reports to centres that trade names are not an acceptable answer. This is also reinforced at the beginning of the examination paper, under the heading, Information for Candidates. It should also be noted that the questions relate to a business scenario TravelM8, as outlined in the pre-release materials, answers should generally reflect this.

In particular, questions 1(a), 1(b), and 8 were well answered. Questions not particularly well answered included Q1(c), and Q7. Answers to these questions showed a lack of knowledge about aspects such as networks, servers and password manager, which were specified in the pre-release material.

Centres need to be aware that this examination is now marked on-line and Centres need to stress to candidates the importance of ensuring their work is clearly legible and to keep their writing within the frame of the examination page.

1 (a)This question was very well answered with very few or no incorrect answers.
(b) This question was also well answered.
(c) This question was not well answered. Answers generally showed a lack of knowledge about subjects such as networks, servers and password manager, which were specified in the pre-release material.

2 Most candidates were able to achieve three or more marks for this question. The Tool Bar and Menu Bar were not well answered, with the terms 'icon' or button' seldom appearing in the Tool Bar definition. Very few candidates were able to use the correct ICT terms to describe and define the items, and comments provided were very vague and demonstrated a low level of literacy skills.

3 There was a full range of marks awarded for this question. Many demonstrated knowledge of 'drive letters' and 'root folder' but only a small minority were able to correctly provide the filename extension.

4 Candidates generally found this question difficult with very few gaining more than 4 marks. The candidates did not seem to understand what was required for the use, and were unable to concisely explain the uses. Often the answer given for the use was a paraphrase of the information given in the Name column. Generally the devices given in the answers were very vague and incorrect. Common wrong answers included CD, floppy disk, 'input' and 'output'

b) The question was not always answered from the 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. The most common correct answer was *customer needs computer/internet access.*

5 Part of this question appeared on the higher paper 2380/02. Although the candidates use these keys, they were not able to explain clearly what they are used for. Most candidates achieved two marks for Caps Lock and Print Screen. Very few could explain the use of the ESC key – to cancel an operation; the answers for Back Space and Delete Key were very confused and inaccurate.

6 This question was not well answered, with most candidates gaining one mark for email. Some candidates gained further marks for correctly identifying spreadsheets and databases, although a significant number of candidates got these the wrong way around. A concerning number of candidates are still using brand names as their answers, which does not gain them any marks.

7 This question, which also appeared on the higher level paper 2380/02, was very poorly answered. This is very disappointing as this topic was included in the list of topics to be researched in the pre-release materials.

(a)The question was testing candidates knowledge and understanding of the different levels of passwords required for different purposes. The answers provided were very vague and only worth one or two marks at most.

(b) Candidates showed no knowledge and understanding of the use of password managers. Very few gained any marks for this question.

8 Most candidates gained three out of the six marks available for this question. Candidates either have a poor knowledge and understanding of the differences between traditional keyboards and concept keyboards, or they failed to read the statements carefully before answering.

2380/01: Higher Tier (Written Examination)

General Comments

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

In general, candidates completed the paper in the time allocated, and answered it in a more competent manner than in the past.

Comments on Individual Questions

1 a) Mostly answered well – the majority of pupils achieved at least 4 marks by identifying the correct software, though a significant number still use brand names instead of generic terms. Few candidates got full marks for this with many repeating the words in the question. The weakest answers were from candidates who were unable to write the phrase 'desktop publishing'.

2 a) Most candidates mentioned letters and numbers, and the idea of simplicity and not forgetting the password. More candidates gave clearer answers to the second part than the first, being unable to explain the significance of combining letters and numbers.
b) Many students answered the question fairly well, though it was noticeable that some had no concept of the nature and purpose of password management software.

3 This was not well answered. Most candidates gave specific examples relating to navigation, few referred to print screen as storing a copy of the screen in memory, and the favourite explanation was of the Home key related to web browsing. The purpose of function keys was poorly explained by many candidates, and a great many described the Home key as taking the user to the internet home page.

4 a) The majority of candidates answered fairly well, giving appropriate examples.
b) Most students gained at least half marks on this part.
c) The term 'upgrade' was better understood than 'patch'.

5 a) Firewall not well explained, many candidates confused spam filter with the pop-up blocker. Many expansions did not relate to Travel M8. Many failed to mention TM8's role in these questions, thus only gaining half marks
b) Most candidates gained at least two marks.

6 Most students achieved 4 or 5 marks for this task.
Very few included the company database and bank database.

7 a) This was answered fairly well. Most students achieve half marks or better.
b) Many candidates gave weak responses and generalisations, showing poor understanding.
c) Few candidates gained all three available marks

8 This was answered appropriately with most achieving 2 or 3 marks, though generally the term 'WiFi' was better understood than 'Hotspot' as a public access point.

9 a) and c) This often showed a poor use of syntax, especially SUM() construction. Many included SUM in the answer.
b) Most candidates managed either a description or an example, but few gave both.

10 Generally candidates gave weak responses where expansions related to Travel-M8 rather than school or society in general. Most candidates achieved one mark in each section. Only a portion referred to TM8 in their answers.
a) Firewall was often described as 'to prevent hackers'.
b) There were frequent mentions of Facebook but they were weak in describing general features.
c) This showed the weakest of the four answers, it was often confused with 'discussion forum'.
d) Descriptions were often vague with loose terminology.

Quite a sprinkling of synchronous/asynchronous, influenced by studying the January 2009 paper.

Grade Thresholds

General Certificate of Secondary Education
ICT B (1095/1995)
June 2009 Examination Session

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	u
2377F	Raw	40				39	35	31	28	25	0
	UMS	55				48	40	32	24	16	0
2377H	Raw	40	39	36	32	29	27	26			0
	UMS	80	72	64	56	48	40	32			0
2378	Raw	64	63	57	49	41	35	30	25	20	0
	UMS	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0
2379	Raw	64	63	57	49	41	35	30	25	20	0
	UMS	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0
2380F	Raw	55				37	31	26	21	16	0
	UMS	55				48	40	32	24	16	0
2380H	Raw	80	55	48	41	35	28	24			0
	UMS	80	72	64	56	48	40	32			0

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	5.3	17.2	37.5	58.8	71.5	81.0	89.6	96.0	100	9948
1995	4.8	19.4	46.0	70.0	82.8	90.7	95.6	98.9	100	6054

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
http://www.ocr.org.uk/exam_system/understand_ums.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication

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