Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Novemeber 2021

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In ICT (4IT1-01) Paper 01

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

1c   Most responses gained one out of two marks, mostly for cheaper and portable. Many responses giving storage as an answer, despite it being in the question.

1di   Some descriptions worthy of one mark mentioning 'sprays'. Very few gained a second mark. Many confused an inkjet printer with a laser printer. Some respones gave a general description of how a printer operates.

1dii   Many responses gave the result of the calculation despite not needing to for full marks. The most common error where attempted was using 1000 in place of 1024 for the number of bytes in a kibibyte. Others used 1024, but did not multiply by 8 to get bits.

1diii   Mostly correct responses, with occasional incorrect responses being printer, scanner or monitor.

1e   Most responses gained two to three marks. Some responses had two lines drawn from the characteristic to hardware losing a mark. The most common incorrect response was that a compact disc stores instructions needed to load the operating system.

1fi   The mark was given for Disk or Disc. Many responses were given a mark for 'CD'

1fii   Many incorrect responses: motor, drive, magnetic disc, cylinder, core, disk spinner, plate

1fiii   Many incorrect responses not giving full description eg: Reader, Hard disk, disk reader. Sometimes confused with spindle.

1g   One mark gained for more applications can run at once or it enhances performance. Fewer responses gained a second mark for the reason. Responses used the term 'run smoothly' as an interpretation of no lag. Good responses included no longer need to use virtual memory.

1h   Misconceptions include how the colour is applied, how a document is printed in the correct order, choosing correct size paper, detecting errors.

2b   Many responses inlcuded what compression data is rather than why it is compressed. Good responses included: to decrease the time of transfer, faster to upload, reduce upload time.

2c   Many responses described compression and did not gain marks. Responses mentioned defragmentation, but did not describe how defragmentation is applied. The majority stated that defragmentation is the ordering of data and not clearing free space by placing data next to each other.

2d   Some responses listed utility software.

2f   Good responses included application software is used to carry out tasks by the user, whereas systems software is used to perform maintenance.

2g   Some responses gained one mark either based on user-generated content or a description of interaction e.g. comments, ratings

3bi   The most popular responses were shopping, banking, gaming and entertainment. Social media was the most common incorrect response.

3bii   Some responses were benefits rather than features. Common responses are grades/assignments/share resources/quizzes/collaboration.

3d   Global reach for market & workforce were the most popular responses, many repeated global workforce and market, limiting to two marks. It is important for candidates to look at the context of the question and apply it to their response, rather than just giving a general response. This is an example where candidates struggled to do this. Most responses related to communication and the flexible working opportunities that the Internet facilitates. Responses often identified the positive impact but did not go on to describe what this meant / entailed. Those that tended to gain all marks were those that pickedd up on the use of transactional data by organisations.

3e   Many responses described what an acceptable behaviour policy is, or explaine why it was needed, what rules might be included in it or the consequences for the individual for not following it, rather than the challenges. The best responses described how not everyone will agree to follow the expectations/rules and can be subverted by using temporary accounts, or people trying to remain anonymous with the intention of not adhering.

3f   Responses often did not apply knowledge to the context of the question. Responses tended to focus on local versus hosted applications in general – such as anywhere, anytime – not using the context of the smartphone, which in itself is portable, or that it facilitated collaboration between users – forgetting the context of editing graphics from a smartphone. Some candidates referenced better features in hosted applications. However, this is not usually the case as local applications often have the better features. Those that referenced storage capabilities of the smartphone failed to acknowledge the second part in regards to the size of the graphic files etc. It was very rare that processing power was mentioned.

4a   Responses sometimes repeated the question in the answer. Flexibility of time, to suit family time were common responses.

4b   Responses mentioned cloud storage or personal account preferences to gain one mark. Responses rarely mentioned both together for full marks.

4d   Majority were full mark responses.

4e   Most responses identifed methods that could be used, with most referencing key words and the use of syntax. However, some did not describe how this worked. Many responses just referred to filtering, which was too vague.

4f   Responses were very mixed here. Again, it is important to read the question carefully, especially where an example is given in the question – some candidates repeated this example in their response and therefore did not gain marks. Some candidates gave two examples of RSI-related risks and therefore limited themselves to a maximum of two marks. Most candidates that gained four marks had responded with a RSI-related response and eye strain. However, it is important that candidates are specific with their response for eye strain – and not be too vague using terms such as 'eye problems'. When it came to RSI-related issues, chair or posture needed to be clearer – e.g. adjustable chair, correct / proper posture.

4h   Very little mention of whitelist and blacklist. Responses included firewall compares data on a list and blocks if unsafe.

4i   Most responses gained one or two marks.

4j   Most responses identified the basics in terms of wired and wireless connections – speed / bandwidth, portability, cost, security and interference. However, responses often did not draw conclusions related to what they had discussed. There was also some confusion made by candidates in terms of the number of devices that can connect and the distance available in a wired network. There were some responses relating to chargers, which do not necessarily provide connectivity for a home network and some responses relating to wrapping wires in aluminium foil to prevent interference.

5ai   Most responses gained one mark for an advantage, but no follow up for the reason.

5aii   Speaker/Headphones were the most popular responses, then TV/Laptop.

5b   Responses gave a valid reason why streaming is better than downloading, but not why it benefits lifestyle.

5c   Most responses mentioned one point that music can be freely copied/shared but did not give a linked point that musicians would lose money.

5d   The most common response was that films are large and take time to upload. The cost of purchasing extra storage was also a popular response.

5e   Bandwidth limited and not enough data in buffer were the most common correct responses. Some responses were too vague. For example: referring to the buffer, but not specifically relating to the fact the buffer needed topping up or that there was not enough data in the buffer; weak / strong connections, rather than specifically relating it to the bandwidth available. Few responses mentioned about the lower resolution / smaller file version being downloaded first and even fewer mentioned about being able to play straight away.

5f   A very wide selection of correct responses for this question, with many responses gaining full marks. Some responses described a braille keyboard as dotty, which was not enough for a mark. Common correct responses were increasing size of font/icons, text to speech, brightness, contrast and voice recognition.

5g   The discussion of needs vs impact on environment was detailed by many and often included reference to landfill, rare metals, power consumption. However, many included no conclusion and a judgement not reached. Responses were often unbalanced, focussing on the negative impact of expanding the use of ICT. The responses that achieved a Level 3 response were able to discuss how ICT has been expanding and how it has continued to expand and the positive and negative effects of this on the environment and how to mitigate against the negative effects – evaluating and drawing a conclusion. Candidates should try to be more specific in the terms and language used, rather than just referring to "things".