



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2021

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Information and Communication
Technology (ICT)

(4IT1) Paper 02: Practical Paper

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Publications Code 4IT1_02_2111_ER

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General Comments

This was the fourth series of the 2017 Specification of Pearson's International GCSE ICT.

There were approximately 819 students for the practical paper in this series. Most students submitted work for all tasks. Tasks where work was not always submitted were Presentation Software and/or Word Processing Software.

Some students lost marks due to a lack of attention to detail where their screen shots were too small, and the content could not be read.

Examiners were pleased to note that there was little evidence that students accessed the internet during the examination. Internet usage during this examination is a breach of the regulations and may result in students being disqualified.

Examiners noted that most students were able to complete all the tasks required, though some did not complete all activities.

Data files

There were very few issues with the data files reported to Pearson.

These files are produced in different formats so that centre staff can make sure that the files open using the software available during the examination. It should also be noted that only the appropriate version of the files should be available for students.

Centre staff are reminded that the data files must remain confidential until after the end of the examination window printed on the front cover of the paper. It is a breach of the regulations for staff to discuss the contents of the data files with students. They are made available before the examination in order that a member of staff can check that the files work with the hardware and software available during the examination. After they have been checked, the files should be copied into the students' examination folders. A second copy in a sub-folder of the students' exam folder is useful to enable them to re-start tasks should they wish to do so.

Labelling and printing

Centre staff should remind students that it is a requirement of this examination that typed students' details are expected on all printouts.

Some examiners noted that the quality of printout varied considerably. Centres should try to ensure that the printer is capable of producing satisfactory output during the examination window. The poor quality of some printouts is often to the disadvantage of the student when the examiner cannot read or distinguish what the student has produced. Students need to check that the quality of the printout provides the evidence necessary to give credit to their work.

Resources

There are two sets of Sample Assessment Materials, the June 2019, November 2020, June 2021 and November 2021 examination papers available on the Pearson website. In addition, centre staff are reminded that Pearson offer the 'Ask the Expert' facility on its website where Senior Examiners can answer questions from staff about the specification and examinations.

Specific Comments

The examination consisted of five activities based on the theme of a Gardening company.

Activity 1: Graphics Software

Task A1a required students to edit an existing image to remove the bottom quarter of the image, make it black and white and add some text. Most students completed this task as required and achieved the three marks available.

In A1b, students were asked to create an image that was fit for purpose with given dimensions using a range of shapes and adding the company name in a serif font.

Most students used the required range of shapes but did not consider the image they created being fit for purpose. There was nothing to suggest anything to do with a gardening company and most students just created an image using a range of shapes but in a random display. In some instances although students had included a screenshot to show the dimensions of the image, the poor quality of the screenshot did not allow the examiner to see the dimensions to be able to award the mark.

Activity 2: Presentation Software

There were a few centres where learners did not complete this task so no marks could be awarded. Students should use the SAMS, AddSAMS and past papers to practice completing a paper to allow sufficient time to complete all tasks.

For A2ai there were four marks available for creating a master slide for the presentation. There was a similar issue here to the Graphics task where although screenshots had been included to show the slide size, they were not always clear to read so the mark could not be awarded. Most students included the slide title in a size 40 italic font and the email address in the footer, but few included both the date and the time.

Task A2aii provided students with the opportunity to achieve ten marks where they were asked to use the slide template to create the presentation. Where students did not create a template, they only lost one mark as the other marks were awarded for the content of the slides. Most students achieved high marks for this section although marks were lost for setting the time of the animation to 6 minutes rather than 6 seconds.

Task A3b required students to print the completed slides with the speaker notes included on Slide 1. Some students only printed the annotated slides rather than the finished ones.

Where students had attempted the theory section of this question, most showed an understanding of the advantages of using a master slide.

Activity 3: Database Software

Students were provided with a database file with three tables of data about clients and gardening services offered.

In Task A3a, students were asked to create a data entry form for the SERVICES table. Most students created the form, but these did not always match the house style with the centre aligned fields. Most students entered the automated date and provided the required screenshot for the form. Most students entered the correct data for A3b.

Task A3c required students to perform a query to find clients that were interested in paying by cash for weekly services that were charged by the hour. Once the query had been completed, the results were required. Students were expected to display certain fields in order (Job ID, Client ID and Service ID) with the Service ID name in ascending order. Most students achieved the marks for this task.

A2d required students to create another query for clients that had chosen Lawncare and Makeover services. This should have resulted in five clients and the details should have been presented with the fields in order of Client ID, Payment Method and Surname in descending order of Client ID. The report should have been formatted to use a suitable heading without any truncation on the heading or the fields. Some students included a title that was not appropriate and did not inform the viewer of the report content whilst others included too many records to meet the required criteria.

Tasks A2ei to A2eiv required learners to show their understanding of databases. Few students achieved marks for this section as although they showed use of the skills required to carry out the practical tasks, they achieved very few marks for the theory behind the use of databases. Where marks were awarded, they tended to be for the identification of the foreign key in the linked tables. A few students achieved a mark for providing a correct response to the question asking for a reason why number is not used as a data type for a telephone number.

Students tended to achieve one mark for explaining one reason why the Contact field in the CLIENT table uses lookup validation but very few achieved the second mark. Students should be reminded that where there is a two mark 'explain' question, they are awarded one mark for the identification and the second mark for the expansion.

Few students provided a reason why the three tables were related.

Activity 4: Using Spreadsheet Software

For this activity, students were provided with a spreadsheet that included two worksheets. When students were required to use formulae/functions, it was intended that they used both worksheets with references rather than copying content from worksheet one and pasting it into worksheet two.

Most students achieved marks for the inclusion of a heading and the formatting of the merged cells.

B1bi required students to use functions to work out the Cost of Lawncare and Makeover. Most students correctly used the VLOOKUP function to achieve full marks for this section.

B1bii to B1bv required students to a range of formulae and functions. Most students were awarded the marks although where a mark was lost this tended to be for the IF statement where they had to multiply the discount. Most understood how to use data from one worksheet to include in another and where this was done, it was usually done well.

Formatting of the spreadsheet to be shown in data view was usually done well for all but the inclusion of row and columns headings. Most students included a printout to show the filtered results to show the costs for Size 2 gardens.

Few students included a suitable chart showing major and minor gridlines and appropriate series labels. Some students did not include any axis labels.

The theory part of spreadsheet task was done well but a limited number of students. Although they were capable of performing the practical tasks there was very little evidence to support their understanding of the theory elements. Where marks were awarded, they tended to be for the PRODUCT question where learners had some understanding of the multiplying of the cells first then multiplying by 2.

Activity 5: Word Processing Software

Students were provided with a leaflet that included some content where they had to finish it following the instruction in the paper.

Where students had included printouts for this task, they had been completed well and high marks were awarded.

Most students provided annotated printouts to show the line spacing and the page numbers. Numbered bullets were used and the table had been formatted as required with the use of merged and shaded cells. Where marks were lost for this section it tended to be for not using a thicker border on the table.

Page 2 required students to use the callout feature on one of the images. Most students just included a text box so the callout mark could not be awarded but marks were awarded for the formatting section.

Overall, this task was completed very well, and most students followed the instructions to produce the final product.

The theory section of this task was completed fairly well and marks tended to be awarded for an improvement students would make to their leaflet. One mark was usually awarded for the explain question (reason why it is important to use folder structures when organising work) and although an identification was included, few expanded on why it was important.

General comments

Most students presented their work well and in the correct order.

In some instances, the quality of the printouts was poor and this did not allow students to access all marks as quite a lot of the work could not be seen.

Where screenshots are requested, please ensure they are not inappropriately cropped and are large enough to be read.

