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Principal Examiner Feedback

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Paper 01

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This was the third series of the specification of Pearson's International Award in Primary Computing.

Most candidates attempted all questions and the one hour allowed for the examination did not seem to be an issue for most candidates.

The question paper consists of two sections.

Section A – assessed the content of the computer science topics.

Section B – assessed the content of the digital technology topics.

The paper included multiple-choice, closed-response questions and short-open questions.

Section A – Computer Science

- Question 1** This was a multiple-choice question.
- It was a very well answered question with most candidates achieving the mark.
- Question 2** Candidates were to complete the sentence by adding a word in the gap.
- The question was quite well answered however, some candidates gave answers that were too general i.e. the question targeted the candidates knowledge of output devices - information being passed **from** a computer to a **human**. Responses that clearly identified an input device were not markworthy.
- Question 3** This was a multiple-choice question.
- This was a well answered question with many candidates achieving the mark.
- Question 4** Candidates were to complete the sentence by selecting a word from the choices given.
- Over half of the candidates recognised that the sentence was describing phishing. Very few candidates incorrectly identified it as cyberbullying but nearly half of the candidate incorrectly identified it as pharming.
- Question 5** This was a multiple-choice question.
- This was a well answered question with many candidates achieving the mark.
- Question 6** Candidates were to complete the sentence by selecting a word from the choices given.
- The question was very well answered with the majority of candidates correctly identifying that communication between digital devices is by the transfer of data.

Question 7 Candidates were to complete the sentence by adding a word.

The question was well answered with the most candidates adding the word internet. Incorrect responses seen included network, ethernet and web browser.

Question 8 Candidates were to explain one advantage of downloading a movie onto a laptop before going on holiday.

Very few candidates did not achieve at least one mark. Examples of responses that did not achieve any marks included 'no need to waste money', 'so that when she misses a part she can watch the full movie again on her laptop' these were too general. Responses that achieved one mark included 'she can watch the movie wherever she wants whether the current is there or not', this achieved a mark for the first part of the response. The second mark was not awarded as 'current' was too vague.

Around a third of candidates achieved both marks.

Question 9 This was a multiple-choice question.

The question was well answered with many candidates achieving the mark.

Question 10 Candidates were to give a benefit of using an online entertainment service.

Unfortunately, this question was not answered well. The responses of many candidates were to do with the fact it is always available. This was given in the question itself so was not markworthy as a response.

Question 11 This was a multiple-choice question.

The question was well answered with many candidates achieving the mark.

Question 12 This was a multiple-choice question.

Over half of the candidates correctly identified that a blog would be best for an online diary.

- Question 13** Candidates were to draw a line for each method of controlling access to its description.
- This was a very well answered question. Very, very few candidates did not achieve at least 1 mark with the majority achieving all three marks. It was clear to see candidates had detailed knowledge of this area of the spec.
- Question 14** This was a multiple-choice question.
- Over half of the candidates achieved the mark realising that option A was the only response that was not a fact and therefore subject to bias.
- Question 15** Candidates were to describe how a search engine would be used to find information about African elephants.
- This was a well answered question. Very few candidates did not achieve at least one mark with many achieving both marks. 'African elephants' is an example of a response that was not markworthy. 'Type African elephants' is an example of the type of response that achieved one mark.
- Question 16** Candidates were to complete the sentence by selecting a word from the choices given.
- The question was really well answered with very few candidates not understanding that an algorithm is a set of **instructions** to complete a task.
- Question 17** Candidates were to draw a line from each component of an algorithm to the relevant action.
- This was a very well answered question. Most candidates achieved all three marks. Very few did not achieve any marks. The main area of confusion appeared to be understanding what a process was.
- Question 18** Candidates were to name two arithmetic operators. As with question 10 there were a number of candidates whose response had been given as part of the question i.e. multiply. This was not markworthy. Where that was not given as one of the responses most candidates gained the two marks.

Question 19 Candidates were to complete the sentence by selecting a word from the choices given.

The question was very well answered with the majority of candidates correctly identifying that a problem can be **decomposed** by breaking it down into smaller sub-problems.

Question 20 This was a multiple-choice question.

The question was quite well answered with many candidates correctly identifying that a variable is a value that can be changed in a program. The most common incorrect response was flowchart.

Question 21 Candidates were to identify the data type that should be used for each of the given inputs..

It was nice to see more candidates understanding that a data type is not an example of data, with far fewer candidates giving examples as their responses. However, this is still a very common error i.e. around 20% of candidates.

Question 22 Candidates were given a flowchart that had three different outputs depending on the weather that was input.

- (a) This tested candidate's knowledge of structural components in the flowchart.

It was quite well answered with very few not achieving at least one mark and most achieving both marks.

- (b) Candidates had to identify two variables used in the flowchart. It is clear that many candidates do not understand that this type of question requires the name of the variable only. Many, many candidates gave responses such as **Message = "Take jacket"** this does not show that they understand the variable is **Message**. Responses such as this did not gain the marks.

- (c) It was surprising how many candidates gave a totally new message that was not part of the flowchart at all. Over half of the candidates did not achieve this mark.

Question 23

Candidates were given a flowchart with an error. They were to explain why the flowchart produced an incorrect message.

There was an improvement in the responses compared to a similar question on a previous paper. Over half of the candidates achieved at least one mark and some achieved both marks.

Responses that did not achieve marks included “because it does not have information about it”, which is too vague to understand what it means and “the flowchart cannot answer because it is odd and even” again too vague.

Responses that achieved one mark included “if the number 2 is entered the flowchart will display it as both odd and even”. This candidate clearly understood there was a problem with the number 2 but the flowchart would not display both as odd and even, hence only 1 mark awarded.

Question 24

Candidates were given part of a flowchart that was to check whether a number input by the user matched a random number.

Many candidates failed to realise the step `NumberToGuess = RandomNumber` was the number to guess being generated and consequently did not include the input of the number by the user. Many also did not realise that there was a loop i.e. the steps repeated if the user did not input the correct number.

Section B – Digital Technology

Question 25 Candidates were given the design of a slide in a presentation.

(a) This was a multiple-choice question.

It is clear to see that candidates get confused between animation and transition. Many incorrectly chose transition as the method of moving the text across the slide. However, there were many who did correctly identify animation would be used.

(b) Candidates were to describe how the slide would be edited so that clicking on the arrow moved to the next slide.

Many used the method they had chosen in (a) as their answer e.g. animate it, use a transition. These were incorrect. Responses should have been describing the process e.g. select the arrow, insert a hyperlink etc.

Question 26 Candidates were to name the software application used to edit images before they were added to a slide.

It was surprising that over half of the candidates did not achieve this mark. The mark scheme did allow brand names too as the question did not specifically say **type** of software application.

Question 27 Candidates were given a part of a database table to study.

(a) This question was quite well answered with many candidates being able to explain the difference between a field and a record. Generally where marks were not awarded candidates had transposed fields for records and vice versa.

(b) Many candidates were unable to recognise that the 'Cost Per Person' field is a currency data type. All of the costs included the currency symbol to clearly show they were monetary values. Over half of the candidates did not achieve this mark.

(c) This was a multiple-choice question.

Very few candidates were able to correctly identify the

criteria that would be used to find trips that cost £3.50 per person.

Question 28 Candidates were to complete a sentence by adding a word from the box.

This was a very well answered question with most candidates choosing recycled as their response.

Question 29 Candidates were to complete a sentence by adding a word from the box.

Less than half of the candidates answered this correctly i.e. rows. The most common incorrect response was columns.

Question 30 Candidates were given part of a spreadsheet to study.

(a) This was a multiple choice question.

It was quite well answered with many candidates correctly identifying * would be required.

(b) Candidates were to give the name of the function that would be used in cell D5.

Less than half could identify the function SUM would be required. AutoSum was also acceptable.

Question 31 Candidates were shown an image.

(a) This was a multiple choice question.

It was very well answered with the majority of candidates correctly identifying the arrow was pointing to a caption.

(b) This was a multiple-choice question to identify a sensible filename for the image.

This was also very well answered with the majority of candidates correctly identifying Detective as the filename.

Question 32 This was a multiple-choice question to identify the description of how a file can be kept secure.

Again, this was well answered with the majority of candidates correctly identifying that using a password would keep a file secure.

Question 33 Candidates were given part of a poster to study.

- (a) Candidates were to complete the table to show where particular formatting features had been used.

Very few candidates did not achieve at least one mark and it was really nice to see how many achieved the full three marks. The question was well answered.

- (b) Candidates were to complete a sentence by adding a word.

Very few candidates were able to say that the text '**After-school clubs**' had been formatted to have a grey background because shading had been used. The most common incorrect response was **highlighting**.

Question 34 This was a multiple-choice question.

Many candidates correctly identified that version B differed from version A because 'split cells' had been used on the heading row.

