

ELC

Computer Science

Entry Level Certificate **R354**

OCR Report to Centres June 2017

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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 specification 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.

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CONTENTS

Entry Level Certificate

Computer Science (R354)

OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Content	Page
Entry Level Computer Science R354	4

Entry Level Computer Science R354

General Comments:

This is the first year assessment of our new Entry Level Certificate in Computer Science (R354). For this first series, there were a small number of entries from a few centres. It was pleasing that centres remembered to submit the correct combinations of marked test papers and project samples. For the projects, a range of electronic and paper based submissions were chosen by centres. Some centres submitted videos of testing through electronic submission which was beneficial for those candidates who struggled to write their test plans and results.

Comments on Individual Parts:

Part one: Computer Systems

It was pleasing that most centres submitted the correct set of exam papers (e.g. CS1 and CS2 or CS3 and CS4) for each candidate, and remembered to send these with the programming project to the moderator. Most of the tests were marked accurately, but there was some leniency with the short and long answer questions.

In the mark scheme each bullet point is worth 1 mark. For example, in test paper CS2 question 9a, the question asks to explain a benefit of self-service tills. There is 1 mark for identifying 'it saves time', and then an additional mark for explaining this. It is not 2 marks for identifying that 'it saves time'.

Where candidates have not answered a question, but repeated what is in the question, marks cannot be awarded.

Part two: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

It was pleasing that most centres submitted the correct set of exam papers (e.g. CTAP1 and CTAP2 or CTAP3 and CTAP4) for each candidate.

When marking flow charts, the statements within the boxes must be related to the function it is performing, and not simply stating if it is a process box or input box etc.

Where candidates have not answered a question, but repeated what is in the question, marks cannot be awarded.

Part three: Programming Project

It was pleasing that the centres limited the choice of programming project tasks to those produced by OCR.

Candidates made a good attempt at the design section, with many producing detailed algorithms. Marking was sometimes generous where there was limited evidence of design, or where candidates had repeated the task instructions instead of planning how it would work.

It is important that candidates clearly show the development of their solutions. It is not expected that this development should show **every** stage of the development, but there should be some evidence showing the successes and failures. Where candidates use screenshots, it would be

helpful if they could provide some annotation to state what each screenshot shows. There is no requirement to fully explain what they are showing.

Candidates made a good attempt at testing, with many producing suitable test plans. We do not expect candidates to list every possible way of testing the solution, but they should include a number of tests to show that it works. Candidates should focus on producing evidence to show the results, e.g. a screenshot or video to show the programs working. The test plan headings can be given to candidates to complete.

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

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

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

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