



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**ICT
AS/Advanced**

JANUARY 2010

Statistical Information

This booklet contains summary details for each unit: number entered; maximum mark available; mean mark achieved; grade ranges. *N.B. These refer to 'raw marks' used in the initial assessment, rather than to the uniform marks reported when results are issued.*

Annual Statistical Report

The annual *Statistical Report* (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

Unit	Page
IT1	1
IT3	4

IT1
General Certificate of Education
January 2010
Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced

Principal Examiner: Dai Rudge

Unit Statistics

The following statistics include all candidates entered for the unit, whether or not they 'cashed in' for an award. The attention of centres is drawn to the fact that the statistics listed should be viewed strictly within the context of this unit and that differences will undoubtedly occur between one year and the next and also between subjects in the same year.

Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
IT1	3748	80	35.4

Grade Ranges

A	58
B	51
C	45
D	39
E	33

N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.

General Comments

Too many candidates did not appropriately reference their spreadsheet work and consequently were not able to gain the marks for the practical work that they had done. In some centres too much annotation was seen, which could have unfairly helped the candidates if they had understood what they were doing. The candidates should be restricted to labelling their pages and the functions that they are demonstrating with a title and not with explanations of what they are trying to do. Again it was pleasing to see that candidates were willing to write in sentences and on question 8 the quality of written communication on the whole was very good and often better than on their other answers.

Comments on Particular Questions

- Q.1** (a) Candidates lost marks on this question by either writing about saving typing time, which was part of the question or by being too vague, i.e. talking about saving space rather than referring to the hard drive.
- (b) Reasonably answered with most able to discuss points about opinions affecting the results but many fewer were able to discuss coarsening of the data. Most candidates were able to give good examples.
- Q.2** (a) Generally well answered but candidates lost marks by not being specific about the fields that needed to be changed or the problem that was caused and answers such as, 'If there is a medical emergency then parents would need to be informed' were given.
- (b) Most candidates could give two costs but could not then apply this to a school's administrative system and if they did the example was often the same in both cases.
- Q.3** Most candidates could state 3 characteristics such as accurate, complete, etc., but the question asked them to describe these characteristics, which meant writing a sentence about them such as complete data is data which includes all the necessary parts and has nothing missing such as the postcode for an address.
- Q.4** Better answered this year though the weaker candidates still confused validation with verification. Candidates also lost marks by using the term 'valid' to try and define validation and by thinking that verification was ensuring that the data entered was correct rather than whether it had been entered correctly.
- Q.5** A lot of candidates thought that this question was to do with data entry rather than processing but on the whole most candidates got close to at least half marks on this question. They also lost marks by not giving proper examples and talking in further generality.
- Q.6** (a) Poorly answered. Candidates needed to demonstrate that they understood that a template was a pre-prepared layout for a document. They also lost marks by going on to talk about presentations and not word processed documents.

- (b) Again not well answered. The candidate needed to show an understanding that it is a stored set of instructions to carry out a task and not just a button. The weaker candidates tended also to be talking about spreadsheet macros which gained no marks.
 - (c) This was better answered but a significant number could not demonstrate that they understood the concept of mailmerging and just rehashed the question. Examples often did not match up with a realistic task that could have been done in a solicitor's office.
- Q.7**
- (a) Candidates had to do more than just say share software or data. For example for sharing data, they had to convince the examiner that they were not just passing a portable media around and that they were accessing a central pool of data.
 - (b) On the whole quite well answered with most candidates getting at least half marks but candidates lost marks by using bland terms such as faster and cheaper without comparing them or properly explaining why this was slow.
- Q.8**
- (a) Too many candidates did not know the three main components of an expert system. The better candidates were able to gain good marks when discussing the advantages and disadvantages.
 - (b) A lot of the weaker candidates did not distinguish between the three components of the question and consequently were too general in their answers. Blood tracking seemed to cause some confusion to a number of candidates.
- Q.9** Better answered than in the summer with more candidates getting the mark for the definition but a significant number still did not seem to understand that it involved a program, code, etc., or that it covered a real life situation.

Comments about the responses in Question 10 refer only to the candidates who had referenced their work and consequently were able to gain any marks.

- Q.10**
- (a) Only the better candidates were able to gain the second mark for each function because they gave enough detail. The weaker candidates often did not gain even the first mark for their descriptions because they were not applying their statement to their actual use of the function which often made one wonder if they understood what they had done or had just gone through an exercise.
 - (b) Most candidates were able to give an advantage of using VLOOKUP but only the better candidates seemed able to describe adequately how their use of the function worked.
 - (c) Generally a well answered question although some failed to name the method that they had used or gained no marks because they did not provide evidence of using it.
 - (d) A significant number got at least half marks here. The candidates who wrote about searching and sorting often lost marks because they did not have before and after screenshots. Only the better candidates got the second mark for their use because they were able to give sensible reasons.

IT3
General Certificate of Education
January 2010
Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced

Principal Examiner: Dai Rudge

Unit Statistics

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Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
IT3	1329	90	46.1

Grade Ranges

A	67
B	59
C	51
D	43
E	35

N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.

General Comments

It was pleasing to see candidates writing in full sentences and writing a reasonable amount for their answers. The quality of written communication was on the whole good and especially so on questions 6 and 9. The paper was demanding both in terms of content and time.

Comments on Particular Questions

- Q.1** (a) Disappointingly answered. Most candidates could give points about designing HCI but the weaker candidates found it hard to distinguish between a novice and an expert user.
- (b) Most candidates could talk about voice interfaces or sound output. The weaker candidates lost marks by not being specific about which disability they were discussing features for.
- Q.2** (a) Reasonably answered with a lot of the candidates using the advantages/disadvantages approach rather than comparing and contrasting. Candidates did sometimes get confused between the two topologies.
- (b) Most candidates seemed to have a good grasp of wireless networking though the weaker candidates sometimes considered points to do with the home rather than the company.
- Q.3** (a) Candidates dropped marks on this question as a significant number were unable to give a proper reason why the practice should have a security policy but most could give at least one item of what it should contain.
- (b) This question was on the whole not very well answered as candidates did not seem to realise that the system/network manager allocates the access levels and did not seem to realise what the logs keep records of.
- Q.4** (a) Most candidates were able to get half marks on this question but failed to get the second mark for each method because they either hadn't defined the method properly or extended points made.
- (b) Candidates did not score very well on this question because they seemed unable to differentiate between ftp access and email and an on-line database and a stand alone database.
- Q.5** This question was badly answered as the majority of candidates did not seem to understand the difference between distributed computing (processing) and distributed databases. The better candidates who understood the difference scored well. When the weaker candidates made relevant points, even though they were talking about databases, they were awarded some credit.
- Q.6** This question was generally well answered with most candidates getting at least half marks. Candidates did drop marks by giving reverse arguments as an advantage for the company and a disadvantage for the employee.

- Q.7** (a) Only the better candidates were able to gain the second mark for the definition as a lot of the definitions just mentioned that it was just a set of rules. A significant number of candidates tried to answer the three things it should contain by discussing ways in which the employee can misuse the ICT facilities, which is part (b).
- (b) Most candidates gained the two marks for the penalties but a significant number only got 1 mark for the ways that data could be misused because their ways were not different but just variations on a theme.
- Q.8** This question was very badly answered with very few candidates seeming to understand what risk analysis is; they seemed to concentrate more on the different actual threats, if they attempted the question at all. The factors are well laid out in the specification.
- Q.9** This question was a good discriminator. China seemed to feature quite a lot in discussions on censorship as one would expect. Some excellent arguments were presented by the better candidates.
- Q.10** These were new topics to the specification and this question did not appear as popular as question 11.
- (a) Most candidates who attempted this question seemed to give some of the points need to make a comparison but did not back them up with good examples.
- (b) Disappointingly answered, with candidates seeming to be aware of the terms adaptive, perfective and corrective but being unable to apply the knowledge to answer this question or to give actual examples.
- Q.11** (a) Most candidates who answered this were able to give the first half of the definition.
- (b) A number of candidates lost marks here by giving tables that would obviously not be part of any possible solution as what was being looked for was any two of the other possible tables that would make a solution but not necessarily the best solution. Foreign keys still seem to be a mystery to a number of candidates.
- (c) This was meant to be a gentle introduction to this new area but a lot of candidates lost marks by not saying whether they were talking about data warehousing or data mining.
- (d) Candidates seemed to just give general advantages of relational databases over a flat file approach rather than referring to redundancy, integrity or consistency as the question asked.



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