



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**ICT
AS/Advanced**

JANUARY 2013

Statistical Information

The Examiner's Report may refer in general terms to statistical outcomes. Statistical information on candidates' performances in all examination components (whether internally or externally assessed) is provided 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.

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General Certificate of Education

January 2013

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	3531	80	34.7

Grade Ranges

A	59
B	52
C	45
D	38
E	32

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

IT1

General Comments

We are still seeing an improvement in the evidencing of the spreadsheet work, with far fewer candidates not numbering/labelling their work. Too many candidates think that they can gain marks from their GCSE knowledge of ICT but invariably they give trivial answers which do not gain marks because they lack enough depth or detail.

Comments on IT2 questions

- Q.1 (a) A well answered question. To get the first mark candidates had to give an actual use and state the method used i.e. finger print recognition or they lost a mark.
- (b) Not so well answered. Very few candidates could give an actual use, or give a detailed enough advantage to gain the marks.
- Q.2 (a) A generally well answered question. Common mistakes were to talk about less storage space or less space without any reference to a computer or the amount you can fit onto the screen.
- (b) Most candidates were able to discuss the problem associated with coarsening of data but only the better candidates could go on and discuss value judgements.
- Q.3 (a) It was disappointing to see the number of candidates who either didn't understand the term peripheral or didn't read the question because they discussed sharing hardware. Candidates also seemed to forget that it is the central nature of networks that give it benefits, i.e. you can do backups centrally rather than just do backups and the same with installing software centrally and then sharing it out.
- (b) Candidates did not gain a mark if they referred to a network rather than the Intranet as they needed to distinguish it from a LAN.
- Q.4 (a) Most candidates could explain what a query was but dropped marks by not using the correct context in their example or by not giving a reason for their query. For example a typical response would be 'Search for all horror DVDs', with no reason. If the candidate had stated 'because a customer wanted to hire a horror DVD and wanted to see what was available' then the candidate would have gained the mark.
- (b) The majority of candidates do not appreciate that a report enables the user to carry out some sort of formatting on the output. 'A printout of a query' was a frequent but inadequate answer.
- (c) Some candidates still used the words import and export in their answers to define import and export which cannot gain the first mark. Some candidates were still though able to go on and gain the second mark by giving an example on mailmerge. Generally the worst answered part of Question 4.

- Q.5 (a) Too many candidates do not know the difference between a range check and a length check. They often state that it is a range check and then go on to describe the maximum number of characters that are permitted. Weaker candidates forgot to relate their example to online shopping. It is also still disappointing to see candidates at this level who do not know the difference between validation and verification.
- (b) A number of candidates still think that verification is to ensure that what is typed in is correct rather than it has been entered correctly. Most candidates could give a method but dropped marks by not relating the double entry of passwords etc, to the creation of the account.
- Q.6 Some candidates did not read the question properly and consequently wrote about searching and faster processing of data. Many candidates did not answer in enough detail/depth. They remembered the words repetitive processing for example and wrote about computers carrying out the same task but they did not go on to mention to the same standard. When discussing accuracy weaker candidates often discussed spell checking rather than calculations. Candidates often fell down in not providing a suitable example. Many candidates appreciated that thousands of records could be stored on a very small hard disk and thereby gained a mark but could not think of an example such as the records kept within their own school or college for the additional mark.
- Q.7 Most candidates could give two or three main components of an expert system. Some candidates did not really understand what an expert system is, thinking it was body scanning or a life support system but picked up marks by stating that they were available 24/7 and were expensive to buy.
- Q.8 (a) This was one of the questions whereby candidates thought that their general knowledge of ICT would suffice. Answers about TVs were common but were not considered relevant unless the candidate clearly went on to describe 'Interactive TV'. Most marks were lost by candidates being unable to write about the 'use' itself. For example, MP3 player by itself does not get a mark but by adding that this is a small portable device that holds thousands of sound tracks would get the mark. All candidates know that this is what an MP3 player is and yet they seem to be reluctant to put this in writing. Candidates also tended to give repeated advantages and disadvantages.
- (b) Most candidates were able to give two health concerns and make one or two points about them.
- Q.9 (a) More candidates were able to give the definition.
- (b) Not very well answered. Some candidates did not read the question and thereby ignored the word financial. They remembered previous papers and either wrote about the weather or car crashes. Those that did write about financial forecasting tended to give general answers about the benefits of spreadsheets.

- Q.10 (a) All three parts required candidates to write **what** they used the function/feature for and **why** they used it. Candidates were generally very poor in saying **why**. Candidates who have wrestled with getting, for example, an IF statement; multiple IF statements; validation routines correct, are very unlikely to forget why they were needed within the spreadsheet.
- (b) A number of candidates dropped marks by not stating which field their chosen method was being applied to. When referring to error messages they need to state exactly what they are and be ones that they have created.
- (c) Not as well answered as in the past as candidates did not show before and after shots of the data. They also frequently could not say why they had done their search or sort.

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Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
IT3	1895	90	45.1

Grade Ranges

A	71
B	61
C	51
D	42
E	33

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

IT3

Comments on IT3 questions

- Q.1 Generally well answered but it is disappointing at this level to see candidates who haven't learnt the topic or write about factors which are precluded by the question.
- Q.2 Most candidates could match up two disabilities and the corresponding help. Candidates threw away marks by not being specific about the disability, i.e. people lacked mobility and so needed to dictate their answers etc. Mobility refers to not being able to walk not unable to use their arms etc.
- Q.3 A lot of candidates wrote about the factors for star and ring and not peer to peer versus client server, consequently they did not make the right points. Only one point on knowledge and one point on cost was accepted.
- Q.4 On the whole well answered but candidates did drop marks by writing about the principles of wireless connection (there are some areas of the country with no signal etc.) rather than wireless networks versus cabled.
- Q.5 Most candidates could give two examples of what a security policy should contain, though the very weakest lost marks by giving points from the same area i.e. two physical methods. Fewer candidates could state the reason why one was required.
- Q.6 Most candidates were able to give one use but lost marks by not saying who created the accounts or were too vague about describing who, what, when.
- Q.7 The specification makes it very clear what are the four main requirements that need to be put in place before a website can be used for online shopping. Unfortunately a number of candidates just gave a list or tried to invent some of their own.
- Q.8 Generally well answered with most candidates gaining at least half marks. Candidates lost marks by giving opposites, i.e. advantage shops can trade more because of the global market and disadvantage that there is more competition.
- Q.9 Too many candidates seemed to forget that the first factor is the risk and couldn't also give examples of risks or the likelihood of the risk occurring.
- Q.10 Candidates seemed to think that all the disaster recovery programme is concerned with is backups or they wrote about how well the company is equipped to deal with the risk. The best candidates did produce some very good answers here.
- Q.11 Candidates tried to give the points for a previous paper on the good and bad factors, rather than the ones for an effective MIS. Candidates also seemed to jumble up the factors and give extensions which didn't match the factor.
- Q.12 Generally most candidates got at least one mark for the definition and could give 4 factors but dropped marks by not describing them and their answers lacked detail as the question required.
- Q.13 Most candidates were able to make at least 2 points but failed to score more because they either duplicated what they were saying, discussed crimes or just repeated the question.

- Q.14 Candidates seemed unfamiliar with what was needed to produce a feasibility report. Some candidates thought that the question was asking them to write about the methods for gathering information from interviews, observation and questionnaires.
- Q.15 For the first mark candidates had to name the method and explain how it worked, they often did not explain. Candidates also dropped marks by being too vague or giving the advantage of one as the direct disadvantage of their other method.
- Q.16 Too many candidates didn't seem to have come across system maintenance and tried to answer the question by trying to apply the dictionary definition of maintenance in general. Those that knew the terms scored well.
- Q.17 I am always surprised by the number of candidates who drop a mark in not knowing the second half of the definition of a relational database. More candidates need to learn a standard definition of normalisation rather than try to make one up.
- Q.18 A lot of confusion over the terms redundancy, integrity and consistency. Candidates tended to mix them up or duplicated what they said so that they could only get 1 mark for each term.
- Q.19 Poorly answered, even though the answers are quite straight forward.
- Q.20 Most candidates could give the definition of a distributed database, but didn't then look at the two separate areas, data in transit and a lot of access points, as areas to concentrate on.



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