



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AS/Advanced

JANUARY 2014

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ICT
General Certificate of Education
January 2014
Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced
IT1

Principal Examiner: Dai Rudge

- Q.1 (a) Quite well answered but too many candidates failed to read the question and gave taking up less memory as an answer. Some candidates are still making a point about being able to see more on screen, which is not accepted.
- (b) Most candidates could pick up 2 marks here. Too many candidates think that the problem is caused by people not understanding the codes or mixing up b for brown, black or blue. Some candidates seem to switch the examples with the problem i.e. reducing the number of categories with value judgements.
- Q.2 (a) Candidates dropped marks by using the characteristic to define itself and by describing the two characteristics given in the question or by being too woolly in their descriptions. The specification gives the acceptable characteristics. The best candidates have studied past answers and wrote quite accurately.
- (b) Most candidates were able to state two costs but dropped marks by duplicating the processing stages.
- Q.3 (a)&(b) Well answered by most but some dropped marks by not naming the verification method.
- Q.4 (a)&(b) Candidates dropped marks by not giving concrete examples of the use in each part and the weaker candidates were too vague with their advantages and disadvantages.
- Q.5 On the whole poorly answered, with very few candidates able to give three advantages. Weaker candidates were able to give one or two advantages but often failed then to give appropriate examples. Too many candidates did not read the question properly and gave speed of processing or searching as advantages.
- Q.6 (a) Generally well answered but some candidates seemed to be still discussing animations rather than animated transitions.
- (b) Candidates lost marks by not giving any features to support their explanation and didn't qualify their advantages.
- (c) Too many candidates did not make it clear that they were talking about importing i.e. that they were bringing in a file. Candidates also dropped marks by repeating an advantage that they had given in (a) or (b)

- Q.7 (a) Most candidates were able to give two advantages but weaker candidates gave descriptions of automatic stock control rather than give four advantages.
- (b) Very few were able to give a good answer for the description of a loyalty card but most were able to give two advantages that they gave supermarkets.
- Q.8 Better answered than in previous years but too many candidates gave devices such as computer or laptop or gave the internet as a use. Extensions were also duplicated for different uses. Whilst online shopping could be considered as an entertainment, it does not mean that all the answers that would be acceptable in an e-commerce question would be acceptable here. It was sad to see that candidates thought that any device which contains a micro-processor, such as a washing machine, is suitable for entertainment.
- Q.9 Badly answered with candidates unable to give two advantages of using a spreadsheet for financial modelling and even less being able to give actual examples.
- Q.10 The quality of evidence and answers are improving but the candidates who are using models/ clones given by the teacher do not do well as they do not understand them and cannot then explain what they have done. As in previous years most candidates were able to give the 'what' for their functions but not able to give the why they had used them. A lot of general descriptions of the functions were seen which do not gain any marks as they have to explain what they are used for in their spreadsheets.

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- Q.1 Most candidates were able to gain four marks on this question. Candidates need to realise though that the factor is 'layout appropriate to task' not appropriate to user. Candidates also dropped marks by not being accurate enough when stating the factor and by not being specific about stating the disability.
- Q.2 Tended to be answered worse than in previous years. Common problems were discussing 'size of network' rather than size of the organisation, discussing cost (precluded by the wording of the question) or not stating performance in terms of what (speed of processing, reliability, etc.) in the factor. Candidates who had learnt the work however, scored very well on this question.
- Q.3 Very badly answered by the weaker candidates and well answered by the better prepared candidates. Weaker candidates tended to get confused with peer-to-peer and client-server or gave a lot of duplicate answers. Another common error was to discuss computers breaking rather than the cables.
- Q.4 It was a shame to see so many candidates not read the question and discuss 'pilot' and 'phased' changeovers. Most candidates could describe two changeover methods but were too vague in their statement of advantages and disadvantages.
- Q.5 Remote management is to do with stations and not users. Weaker candidates thought that it was all about monitoring or about tasks normally done at the server. Only the best candidates could describe five or six correctly.
- Q.6 On the whole well answered with most candidates gaining half marks. Too many marks were dropped by candidates giving something as an advantage of one connection and as a disadvantage of the other. Dialup is only cheaper than broadband if someone is a light user.
- Q.7 Weaker candidates found this hard, being only able to give one or two fears with no extensions,
- Q.8 Similarly weaker candidates could only give training as an answer, with no extension and weren't able to mention anything else that management could do to lesson fears.
- Q.9 It was pleasing to see so many candidates trying to give four factors and an extension for each, of an effective MIS. Again lack of accuracy in stating the factors cost candidates marks but most candidates could state two marks.

- Q.10 Again quite well answered but a number of candidates thought that the question was about teleworking or mobile phones.
- Q.11 Very well answered with most candidates being able to give at least two requirements. A search facility is a standard facility, not just a requirement of on-line shopping. The requirements are well laid out in the specification.
- Q.12 Most candidates made a very good attempt at this question but there does still persist a preoccupation with delivery costs amongst the weaker candidates, which is not a particular issue for on-line shopping alone.
- Q.13 A variety of explanations were seen, a lot not accurate enough. Candidates would benefit from learning from one of those given in the mark scheme.
- Q.14 Similarly here, three reasons are given in mark schemes and it would help weaker candidates if they had sight of them.
- Q.15 It is disappointing, still, to see how many candidates think that distributed databases are the same as distributed processing.
- Q.16 Most candidates who attempted this question were able to give one advantage but only tended to give part of the definition.
- Q.17 More candidates were able to state the definition and the 'what' part of the definition but only the very best were able to give the 'why' part,
- Q.18 Most candidates were able to give a couple of threats and expand on them but tended to either give vague consequences or repeated the same ones over and over. Hacking and viruses are not threats in themselves. Inserting a virus to deliberately destroy data is an example of sabotage and hacking to take data is theft.
- Q.19 The question is about establishing procedures to minimise or prevent threats. Weaker candidates did not tend to give any factors only mentioning one or two examples/expansions.



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