



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**APPLIED ICT
AS/Advanced**

JANUARY 2014

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en>

Online results analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Unit	Page
1	1
5	5

APPLIED ICT
General Certificate of Education
January 2014
Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced
AICT1 – eBusiness

Chief Examiner: Jen Gillies

General remarks

The AICT 1 paper is divided into two parts: Part A, comprising a one-hour written examination paper and Part B, a series of tasks to be carried out in a practical two-hour examination.

Centres were provided with the paper for Part A in an on-screen format that requires candidates to enter their responses into text boxes, with one screen per question. Where centres were not able to access the on-screen examination, traditional paper-based examination papers were used. These papers required candidates to write their responses in the spaces on the paper. Neither examination format appeared to cause problems from the candidates' perspective, nor did the format appear to influence candidate outcomes.

In many cases, candidates provided brief responses to questions that carried a significant number of marks. Candidates should note the wording of the questions, which is designed to indicate the level of the detail required in candidates' responses by the use of words or phrases such as 'state', 'describe briefly', 'explain' or 'describe in detail'.

Centres and candidates are reminded of the value of giving examples to clarify an answer and, in some cases, to provide additional evidence of understanding of the topic of the question. A good example, even if not specifically requested, can often help to secure a mark when a description is lacking clarity or detail.

Some candidates lost marks by not relating their responses to the context of the question or the given scenario. Candidates should be aware that this is an applied qualification and the examination is designed to test their ability to use their skills and knowledge of ICT in the given situations. If a question describes a specific context, and invites the candidates to refer to the context, then marks will be lost if this is not done.

The standard of language used was generally good, though some weaker candidates lost marks through the apparent inability to express themselves clearly.

In Part B of the examination, candidates were required to carry out a series of on-screen practical tasks set in the same context as Part A of the examination. Many candidates were able to demonstrate good practical skills in the use of database and spreadsheet software. However, for a minority of candidates, the level of competence in the use of database and spreadsheet software was concerning, given that they would have carried out the coursework tasks for AICT 2 as part of their AS studies.

Part A – written paper (40 marks)

Q.1 (a) Name **one** stakeholder of Chwarae Teg.

The majority of candidates were able to identify an appropriate stakeholder.

(b) Identify **two** features of email that could help Chwarae Teg promote the jewellery to its existing customers.

Most candidates were able to identify two suitable features, with multiple recipients and use of attachments being the basis of the most common responses. Some candidates referred to cost and/or speed without reference to the quality of the communication.

Q.2 Identify **two** methods that could secure the data held on a laptop and explain their effects.

This question was answered poorly, with few candidates addressing data security as described in the specification, and with many candidates concentrating on the safety of data, offering responses based on virus protection.

Q.3 Describe **two** features of a standard spreadsheet package, other than formatting, that could be used to present the financial information.

This question was answered poorly, with few candidates noting the reference to presenting information in the question and many responses based on ease of calculation, use of formulae, etc.

Q.4 Describe **two** features of project management software that would help Chwarae Teg to meet its deadline.

This topic has caused difficulties in previous examinations, although, in this instance, the question was well addressed, with many candidates, drawing on their experience of using project management software for AICT 5, able to describe suitable features.

Q.5 (a) Name **one** method Jeremy could use to carry out primary research.

The majority of candidates were able to identify an appropriate method of primary research.

(b) Describe **two** secondary sources Jeremy could use to gather more information to help him make his decisions.

The majority of candidates were able to identify two appropriate sources, although many candidates omitted any description of the type of information that could be gathered from the identified sources.

Q.6 Explain the difference between data and information.

Many candidates scored well in this question. However, many candidates were not able to use appropriate language to express the difference between data and information clearly.

- Q.7 *(Information flow question. Candidates are provided with a scenario and a partially completed diagram.)*
Complete the diagram to show the information flows that take place in the ordering process.

Most candidates gained 3 or 4 of the available 5 marks for this question. Please note that candidates should ensure that they identify the information that flows through the organisation rather than the way in which it is sent. Responses should not include verbs.

- Q.8 (a) *Name the legislation that aims to prevent malicious damage to data.*

Most candidates were able to name the legislation.

- (b) *Describe, using **two** examples, what is meant by malicious damage.*

Most candidates scored well in this question and were able to describe malicious damage and give relevant examples.

- Q.9 *Identify the technologies that could be used and explain why **each** would be appropriate for keeping in touch.*

This extended question provided candidates with the opportunity to gain a large number of marks. Most candidates were able to identify examples of suitable technologies, but some lost marks where explanations lacked technical detail in relating the features of the technologies identified to the intended purpose.

Part B – practical tasks (60 marks)

Most candidates were able to access marks for the two practical tasks. However, several candidates appeared to have difficulties in carrying out even basic tasks, and some described tasks that they were not able to complete as improvements for task 1 (d).

Task 1 – Sales

- (a) *The sales department has details of customer orders and the jewellery. These details now need to be organised.*

Most candidates were able to recognise the need to split the data into jewellery items and customers, and many candidates used action queries to achieve this, gaining additional credit for their work.

Most candidates attempted to create relationships between their tables. A significant minority of candidates failed to recognise the need for the use of primary keys for both tables and some selected an incorrect field for the primary or foreign key, causing difficulties in subsequent tasks.

Few candidates gained all marks available for the adjustment of field lengths or the appropriate application of validation rules.

- (b) *To assist the inputting and viewing of customer orders and jewellery, the sales department requires an input form.*

Most of the candidates with correctly related tables were able to build a suitable input form with appropriate features, but very few candidates were able to construct a correct 'IFF' statement to display the required discount message.

- (c) *Chwarae Teg wants to celebrate its third anniversary and the sales department would like to send invites to a birthday party. Invitations should only be sent to those customers living in close proximity to their premises, i.e. Swansea and Cardiff.*

Most candidates were able to create the simple query for this invitation and many created a correctly merged invitation document, although layout errors in the positioning of the merged fields were commonplace.

- (d) *Describe two ways in which the database could be improved to allow Chwarae Teg to have an effective stock control system. Explain the features within the database software that you would need to use to carry out these improvements.*

Very few candidates were able to access high marks for this task as, whilst many sensible suggestions for improvement were put forward, these were rarely accompanied by any technical explanation of the software features needed for implementation.

TASK 2 – Finance (spreadsheet task)

The finance manager would like you to identify the loan amount and the best financial institution to approach for a loan.

Most candidates were able to create the additional worksheets and follow the given instructions for entering simple formulae and formatting the data.

Many candidates were also able to develop the memo worksheet to output the required interest rates, although a surprising number of candidates had difficulty displaying the output data as a percentage.

Format the worksheet to create a memorandum.

In general, the formatting of the worksheet to create a memorandum was not well done, with simple tasks such as text wrap and alignment within merged cells causing difficulties. Very few candidates added the details required to create a standard business memorandum.

APPLIED ICT
General Certificate of Education
January 2014
Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced
AICT5 – eProject

Principal Moderator: Peter Lewis

Introduction

This examination series saw considerable variation in the use of Project Management software and, whilst it was very encouraging to see a number of centres developing the candidates' skills and understanding in this area, there are still a number of centres who make only superficial use of this software.

Outside Controlled Conditions

The majority of candidates appear to have involved themselves in all aspects of this task outside the controlled time whilst working as a group and this was evidenced by the way in which almost all candidates were able to respond to the Revised Client Requirements and implement the revised solution. Previous moderator reports have highlighted the problem whereby candidates have not been sufficiently involved in the group work and, in particular, the development of the spreadsheet model. Consequently, when in the controlled conditions, these candidates have been unable to implement the Revised Client Requirements in any meaningful way. This was less evident in this series and, whilst the quality of the implementation of the Revised Client Requirements varied, the majority of candidates were able to implement and embed the changes within their prototypes in a comprehensive way.

Problem Definition

It is most helpful for both the centre marking and the moderation process that candidates highlight changes they make to this document in the controlled time in a different colour. Centres are reminded that it is only these changes by the individual candidate during the controlled time that can be considered when marking this section. Candidates must look beyond the wording of the Revised Client Requirements and consider the implications of these changes on the whole of the project. In a small number of cases, candidates simply added the Revised Client Requirements to their individual Problem Definition almost word for word, without considering the wider implications of these changes.

Project Organisation

This section caused the greatest concern for some centres and, in certain cases, centres were awarding marks in the second and third mark bands for what was, in fact, very basic project management. Centres must ensure that:

- any work completed outside the controlled time by the group is not considered for the marking of this section. There is no requirement to show any project management for the group work stage and, whilst many centres do this as part of their teaching of the project management software, this must not be to the detriment of detailed and thorough project planning for the 15 hours of controlled time.
- candidates use the software for project management and *not* for simply recording what they have done. Candidates should have a benchmark plan of how they will spend the 15 hours of controlled time either just before they go into the controlled time, or as a first task in the controlled time. This is the benchmark plan. Candidates should then update this plan at regular intervals throughout the controlled time, showing what actually happened. For example, if a sub-task took longer than planned for in the benchmark plan, they must record this but also consider the implications of this delay on the rest of the plan. This might include using some of the contingency time if they have built that into the benchmark plan, or taking less time on another later sub-task to ensure that they finish the work within the 15 hours. Similarly, if a sub-task took less time than planned, they must show the implications of that in their updated plan. In several cases, candidates used the project management software as a type of 'diary', showing how they have spent their time and built up the plan as they went through the controlled time, and this is not the correct use of project management software.
- the whole task (including the Revised Client Requirements when they are introduced) is broken down into a number of main tasks and that these main tasks are further broken down into subtasks. It may be appropriate to add contingency at suitable places within the plan (for example, at the end of each main task) and checkpoints throughout where candidates will consider their progress and make amendments as described in the bullet point above. Each sub-task should be allocated an amount of time for completion of the sub-task and any resources needed for the completion of the task identified at sub-task level. Candidates should then consider the critical path of the sub-tasks and identify any predecessors. This should all be done for the benchmark plan.
- candidates use the project plan throughout the controlled time at various junctures (probably those identified as checkpoints in the benchmark plan) to show what has actually happened and the implications of this, as described above. At this stage, they can add notes to their plan explaining why the changes have been necessary and explaining the impact of these changes on the rest of the plan.

The Project

The majority of candidates were able to implement the changes introduced through the Revised Client Requirements into their spreadsheet models. Previous moderator reports cautioned against superficial solutions to the Revised Client Requirements where candidates implemented the solution on one of the worksheets, rather than the whole solution. In most cases, a full implementation of the Revised Client Requirements requires the whole solution to be adapted to reflect the new requirements, as well as a re-recording of macros. In this series, most candidates were able to fully implement their solution thoroughly and there were some impressive and imaginative solutions presented for moderation.

Review

The quality of the evaluative writing varies considerably, but it is pleasing to note that, on the whole, candidates are now spending longer on the reviews and these generally translate into higher marks. Centres where guidance is given to candidates on the structure of the review and the use of effective evaluative language afford candidates every opportunity of achieving the highest possible mark.

Presentation

Most candidates are able to adapt and use the template provided and link their evidence to this document and, as such, are generally awarded 5 marks. Care must be taken to ensure that candidates do not point their links to networked drives as these will not work when the work is copied to a CD. Candidates must not be tempted to create multimedia ePortfolios for this unit as this is not required.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk