



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**IT (New)
AS/Advanced**

SUMMER 2009

Introduction

Summer 2009 is the first award of the new AS. For all specifications there have been changes to the content of the units, and in many new marking criteria have been introduced and unit weightings altered. Also in some subjects there has been the withdrawal of internal assessment. However, the biggest change in most subjects has been the reduction from a three to a two unit assessment.

In moving to the new specification awarding bodies have sought to maintain the overall United Kingdom standard for AS, as measured by the proportion of candidates achieving grade A and by the proportion achieving a pass grade in each subject. Comparability between 'old' and 'new' specifications is measured in terms of the overall subject outcome and not in terms of unit outcomes. Many of the units in the new specifications will bear little relation to those in the old specifications. Even where they are very similar, it is quite likely that outcomes will be different. The expectation is that the number of A grades at unit level will decrease in a specification where the number of units is reduced, whilst the number of passes will increase. The overall cash-in outcome, however, will be maintained. These same principles will apply to the new A level where a six unit assessment is reduced to a four unit assessment.

Statistical Information

GCE (AS)

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

Other information on a centre basis is provided when results are issued. 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	2
IT2	5

IT

General Certificate of Education 2009

Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced

Principal Examiner: Dai Rudge

Unit Statistics

The following statistics include all candidates entered for the unit, whether or not they *cash'd 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	5687	80	39.8

Grade Ranges

A	59
B	53
C	47
D	41
E	36

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

IT1

General Comments

Candidates continued to write well. It appeared that candidates had been better prepared for the spreadsheet questions than in the January session.

- Q.1 Generally answered well and most candidates now seem to understand the distinction between information and knowledge. Candidates lost marks by not giving proper examples or did not apply a proper rule to the information and only said things like, swimmer B was the fastest and not gone on to say that consequently they had won.
- Q.2 (a) Only the better candidates seemed to understand what the concept adding value to an organisation means, despite being given one of the ways. Some others were able to gain a mark by being able to give one example.
- (b) A question that candidates should have done well with but many tended to repeat the costs given in the question rather than describe the different stages in gaining good quality information.
- Q.3 Weaker candidates correctly wrote about the Internet, although many did not gain the second mark as they could not explain why or how the internet could be made use of. Many of these students were then unable to give a different source and if they did they were unable to develop it.
- Q.4 (a) (i) This was a question which I would have expected to have been well answered as all candidates should have used the feature in their coursework. Sadly, many candidates confused animated transitions with animated objects and consequently wrote about text and images flying into the presentation. Candidates struggled with getting a second mark as they were unable to give an example.
- (ii) Too many candidates wrote about templates in word processed or dtp documents. Many of the candidates who gained the first mark struggled with getting a second mark as they failed to give an appropriate use.
- (iii) Generally answered well with more candidates gaining the use mark rather than being actually to properly describe a hyperlink.
- (b) A very poorly answered question, with few candidates seeming to understand what HTML is.
- Q.5 Generally answered well but it still discriminated as only the better candidates got 4 or 5 marks.
- Q.6 Generally answered well. Weaker candidates lost marks by not using correct technological terms when giving the health hazards, and they tended to duplicate the actions to minimise these risks.
- Q.7 A significant number of candidates got verification and validation round the wrong way for no marks or could not correctly define the terms. Some partially rescued the situation by actually being able to give proper examples.

- Q.8 (a) A significant number of candidates did not understand what expert systems were and often wrote about monitoring systems. They sometimes gained a couple of marks by giving correct answers.
- (b) Not particularly well answered. There was confusion between x-ray machines and body scanners. Many did not appreciate that the scans are non-invasive and are to assist diagnosis. Few candidates gained top marks
- (c) This question also discriminated well as weaker candidates could only give one or two valid points and merely repeated the wording of the question with little understanding of what this part was about.
- Q.9 Few gained a mark in part a as they were unable to give a proper definition of simulation modelling. Part b candidates often wrote about making cars safer rather than answering the question and seemed to think that it was used by the police to model what had happened at an accident, for prosecution purposes.
- Q.10 A large number of excellent spreadsheets were seen. The best candidates had thought about what they needed and minimised the number of pages taken into the exam. Candidates should not annotate the spreadsheets before going into the exam.
- (a) Too many marks were lost by candidates not stating where the work could be found, and if it was not found quickly they could not be credited. When they did most obtained 50% of the marks as they were only able to give part of the purpose for using the formula
- (b) Surprisingly a well answered question. Candidates clearly knew about making data entry more efficient and most gained at least half marks but some tried to use VLOOKUP again.
- (c) Generally well answered.
- (d) The use of sort routines was often quite vaguely described and a significant number wrote about two other factors instead and could consequently only gain a maximum of two marks.

IT

General Certificate of Education 2009

Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced

Principal Examiner: Noreen Kay

Unit Statistics

The following statistics include all candidates entered for the unit, whether or not they *cash*ed 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
IT2	6227	80	55.7

Grade Ranges

A	71
B	61
C	52
D	44
E	36

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

IT2

General Comments

Many centres did well in interpreting and marking the new coursework unit. Some very professional documents, web pages and presentations were produced with many candidates attempting work at the advanced level in all three tasks.

Candidates are providing good evidence for the most part and the presentation of the coursework with a few exceptions was clear and easy to follow.

There are, however, still candidates who wasted their time in explaining how to insert tables etc, when this feature can clearly be seen on the printout. Where evidence is clearly required it should be provided in the form of hand drawn designs, printouts, annotation or before and after screenshots of process undertaken by the candidate. CD's or other electronic copies of candidate work should not be submitted for moderation.

Analysis

Background was well done. Candidates do not understand 'ethos' and house style. A description of the colour scheme is not an explanation of ethos or house style. Where candidates mistake age group or target audience for ethos they should not be awarded marks.

Analysis of an organisations documents

This was one of the most troublesome sections and needs further clarification at INSET. Teachers who cannot attend INSET are advised to study the teacher guidance and exemplar material. Many centres double marked. Candidates described three documents and centres marked it in the background section and again awarded marks in the data processing activities section. Moderators interpreted this to give candidates maximum benefit but inevitably there was disagreement with centre marks. When analysing tools and techniques candidates only described fonts but some centres gave full marks. When describing an actual or potential automated document the candidates failed to describe or suggest in detail suitable merged fields but some centres gave full marks. When analysing an existing or potential web page candidates were required to identify at least three techniques which were used or could potentially be used to get the second mark, many did not but again some centres gave full marks.

Task 1 - Desktop publishing

Candidates must print out the final document. **Only features which appear on the final document should be given credit.** In many instances there was evidence of construction in screenshot form but these features did not appear on the final printed documents or full screenshot of the whole final document. Candidates are to be congratulated on heeding the advice given in that there was less cropped or illegible evidence.

Design of document

Purpose of the document

This was very well done by most centres except when they did not produce any.

Image/ethos being conveyed

Many candidates confused image/ethos with the target audience or gave a general description of a colour scheme or logo they wished to use. In order to gain the mark candidates needed to identify the philosophy, vision or persona being reflected by the document or to explain or justify why they used a particular icon or colour scheme.

Detailed design of the document

Most designs were quite detailed but the details of data and the eight techniques to be used were still weak across whole centres. Candidates varied in the level of detail given in their designs. One mark should be awarded for:

- An outline layout with inherent page orientation and identifying which frames were for text and which were for pictures.
- Details of the '**data**' - *both* text and graphics.
- Details of fonts and font sizes to be used.
- Details of at least eight special features used such as tables, bullet points, tab settings, line spacing paragraph styles, etc.

Use of basic features

This was an area where evidence should be clearly seen **on the printed leaflet** with the exception of the origin of graphics. Some candidates clearly copied and pasted a table from the Internet as it appeared on several leaflets. This should not be awarded a mark for a table but should be treated as an image. It was however very useful where candidates annotated their final documents using arrows to show where they used each feature, as this helped the moderator to detect them more quickly. Both headers and footers needed to be present. Some candidates gave only a header or footer and hence should not have been awarded the mark. Sometimes the footer was lost in the body of the text if margin sizes were unsuitable or it was obscured by a large border and again candidates should not have been awarded any marks. It is also important to note that if candidates put in automatic pagination they are awarded a mark in the advanced section so something additional is needed here. There was often evidence of construction of headers and footers but these did not appear on the final document or alternatively only appearing on one page in the final document.

Use of Advanced features

Here supporting evidence for the features used is absolutely essential. The most popular techniques attempted by candidates included layering, watermarks, page or frame borders, line spacing and customised tables. Many candidates could have improved their reports by providing clear before and after screenshots for:

- Different paragraph formats.
- Own tab settings.
- Own indents.

Superscripts and subscripts both needed to be used and it is essential that screenshots show before and after evidence for candidates to be awarded the mark. Many candidates did not include both subscript and superscript. Centres should discourage candidates from inappropriate or nonsensical use of superscript and subscript just to cover the marking criteria. These should not be credited with a mark. A few candidates are shading in tables or borders and claiming it as customised tables.

Task 2 - Automated document

Note that candidates are expected to produce *'professional'* letters as most of them stated in their ethos. Any mistakes should be penalised. Candidates should be encouraged to spell check their final document, proof read it and in particular check for capital letter and basic grammatical errors.

Design of document

Purpose

This was very well done by most candidates.

Image/ethos

This was better answered in this section with many candidates indicating they wanted a professional or formal image to their document.

Design of document

This was generally well done but candidates must remember to plan their three macros as part of their design work. A few candidates did not achieve the 'data' mark because they wrote 'body of letter' and did not describe the content of the letter.

Use of Basic Features

This was generally well done but centres did award marks when there was a clear spelling or capital letter mistake.

Use of Advanced features

Again this was well done but some candidates need to think about the 'professionalism' of their macros. Many candidates attempted to do a variety of three macros. However it must be noted that it is nonsensical to do a macro to type the word 'Dear', another to type the word 'Yours' and a third to type the word 'sincerely'. This should not be awarded three marks. Some candidates continue to crop the evidence showing that they had saved their mail merge template as a template document (not letter headed notepaper or a blank page). A few candidates attempted other possible approaches using automated questionnaires.

Task 3: Presentation

Many marks were lost because there was *no evidence at all* of inserting required features, especially videos and animations.

Design of presentation

Most candidates chose to do a PowerPoint type presentation but some only did three slides. Leniency was applied for this changeover year only. Candidates should produce six slides or web pages as detailed in the specification.

Purpose

This again was very well done and the better candidates described how the presentation was to be distributed or how it was to be shown.

Design of Presentation

Candidates varied in the level of detail given in their designs. One mark should be awarded for:

- The basic background style and outline layout of the presentation with inherent page orientation and identified which frames were text and which were for pictures.
- Details of the data, both text and graphics in these frames.
- Details of fonts and font sizes used.
- At least six details of background style, animation, transition, hotspots, hypertext, bookmarks, sound and video or custom animation.

Use of Basic features

Background style

Candidates lose this mark where they use different backgrounds on each slide without justification.

Animations and transitions or rollover buttons on web pages

Usually very well done. Candidates doing web pages used scrolling banners, etc, for animations. For transitions they used rollover buttons or edited the html coding to change the colour sequence from one page to another. For centres using the newer version of Dreamweaver, another alternative for transitions could be image effects, (e.g. thumbnails as illustrated by YouTube or Flickr and CS4 has a new feature called Web Photo Album or an add-on called Lightbox which can emulate what you see on major websites). It must be made clear if the technique is used for transitions and can not be repeated for animations.

Hypertext, hotspots, bookmarks

Again generally well done. Most candidates did very well in this section but where marks were lost it was usually because of poor provision of evidence.

Use of Advanced features

It was encouraging to see how many candidates had used downloaded MP3 files and had taken original video.

Use of Sound

Many candidates did attempt to capture sound and many provided good evidence that they had done so. Some candidates only showed two 'loads' e.g. load onto disc from hard disc and load into presentation.

Use of original video

Many candidates planned detailed storyboards but some did not put the details of timings and effects used, on their storyboard. Many candidates produced their own original, individual video and applied effects to it, but some gave reduced the size greatly or cropped screenshots so it was difficult to see their evidence. Candidates should be encouraged to annotate their evidence.

Use of original animation

There were generally three approaches to this section.

Animated Images

It was encouraging that many candidates attempted to produce and evidence a simple animated image to gain a mark. Some candidates did go on to develop their animation into a more complex one and gained an extra mark. Three different types of animation were seen:

- 'Flash' animations.
- Text animations produced from sites such as www.3dtextmaker.com.
- Animations done in draw or photo editing packages.

Evaluation

This section was a clear differentiator with a wide variety in the quality and quantity of candidate responses. Evaluations were, however, usually over marked. Some candidates described what they had done with a limited attempt at evaluation or critical analysis but were awarded full marks.

Compression and storage techniques

This was generally over marked by centres. A general discussion does not merit the award of four marks. Many candidates only compared the various merits or problems of using file formats such as bmp and .jpg. General discussions about zipped files do not merit marks. Candidates are expected to discuss in detail the relative merits of all the compression techniques they have used, relating their comments to the files they have used and justifying their choices.



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