Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2013

International GCSE in Information and
Communication Technology (ICT)

(4IT0) Paper 01: Written Paper

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Multi-choice questions

The performance of candidates in this series was not good as in the previous series. There were three questions where less than half of the candidates gained the mark:

- Question 6 – this was not a higher order question and it was disappointing to note that the majority of candidates chose Option B 'primary store' as the type of storage for a hard disk
- Question 8 – only a minority of candidates were able to identify that a spreadsheet is used to for computer modelling
- Question 15 – this targeted the higher level candidates and the majority of candidates who did not gain the mark selected Option A.

It was pleasing to note that in the series very few candidates did not attempt all questions.

Free response questions

Question 17

Candidates generally scored well on this question, with very high numbers gaining marks for part (a). Whilst the majority of candidates struggled to identify the type of memory used in a USB pen drive, they often went on to correctly identify two benefits and one drawback of using USB pen drives. A large number lost marks in both parts for responses relating to the capacity of pen drives.
More than half of candidates were able to give two reasons for backing up data and the majority gained at least one mark for identifying decisions made when creating a backup; the selection of the storage device and where to keep it being the most common correct responses.

Question 18

Candidates generally scored well in part (a) of this question which related to using EPOs terminals.
The majority were able to identify a (barcode) scanner as an input device, however marks were lost in (ii) where candidates gave details of what makes up a barcode e.g. country of origin, manufacturer, rather than what it represents i.e. an identification number/code. Candidates lost marks in (iii) by providing vague answers e.g. it is quicker/faster. The majority of candidates gained at least 2 marks for correctly ordering the steps in the EPOS process. Part (b) was not as well answered with only half of candidates correctly identifying a card reader in (i) and less than half were able to gain two or more marks in (ii). Generally marks were gained for microchips having more memory and magnetic stripes being more prone to damage.

Question 19

Only a small minority were able to identify project management software in (a)(i), this was disappointing as it is explicit in the Specification. However, many more were able to identify dates/timelines as being part of the plan and a few managed to identify steps/tasks.

The majority of candidates correctly identified LAN in (b), however a significant number gave WAN or intranet.

Only a few candidates were able to identify sharing peripherals as a way to reduce hardware costs in a network; a significant number suggested using a wireless rather than wired network. In (c)(ii) candidates showed confusion between networks and the internet by identifying routers and modems as hardware needed for a network.

The majority of candidates made a good attempt at 19(d) however there were only a few who were able to explain how a laser printer works. A significant number mixed up the benefits and drawbacks of the two types of printers.

Many candidates were able to identify access rights in (e), but only a small number were able to identify a second correct response.

In general candidates responded well in (f)(i) giving sensible items that the company could provide to reduce health risks; however the second part of the question proved to be more problematic, with many candidates giving vague responses or offering general health related answers such as drinking more water.

Question 20

As in 19(f) candidates responded well in part (i) where the candidates needed to give principles of the Data protection Act, in (ii) candidates struggled to identify the rights of individuals under the Act.

20(b) proved to be a challenge for many candidates, responses were often vague in (i) with candidates concentrating on the 'comfort' of home and being able to simultaneously work and baby-sit. In (ii) candidates gave some very interesting responses, such as the company not needing to pay employees as much money, employees being able to work while ill and being able to call upon employees at any time of the day or night.

The majority of candidates were able to score well in (c), a common incorrect response was WiFi being able to transfer 'more' data than Bluetooth.

Candidates generally did well in (d), often identifying the hardware device and one of the other requirements. Many were able to gain a mark in (iii) for preventing unauthorised access, but few mentioned security or encryption. Many candidates lost the mark for giving WAP in (iv) rather than WPA.

Candidates often lost the mark in (e)(i) for merely stating quicker / faster rather than instant send / received quickly. Many candidates gained two marks in (ii) for the methods, but lost the extra marks by not giving examples relating to Josie's work.

Question 21

Candidates generally scored well in both parts of the question. In (a) a few lost marks for buyers not having to leave home, which was given in the question and others for responses which did not relate to buying electrical goods. Many lost marks in (b) for concentrating on fraud / bogus websites / identity theft in all three responses.

Many candidates gained a mark in (b) for identifying an email requesting personal data; however the additional mark was lost due to vague responses which often went off at a tangent.
Candidates did well in (c); often correctly citing viruses and anti-virus software and hackers and firewalls.

Question 22

In general candidates made a good attempt at both part of (a). In (i) many candidates gave correct responses relating to information being biased / accurate / up to date / reliable. In (b) the most commonly correct response were avoiding plagiarism and providing a bibliography.

22(b) was the only level based question on the paper and candidates generally did much better than in previous series. It was pleasing to see that many candidates prepared a 'plan' before attempting the answer and in these instances they generally scored well.

Many candidates covered CAL, VLEs, simulations and new technologies. Top marks were missed when these candidates gave descriptions but failed to go on to consider how these enhanced learning.

Many candidates failed to gain access to the higher mark band when the responses focussed entirely on Internet based areas.
Unfortunately some candidates lost marks by concentrating entirely on using the internet for research, which was included in the question.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link: