

Information and Communication Technology

Level 1 09876

Level 2 09877

OCR Report to Centres

July 2012

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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Functional Skills Information and Communication Technology Level 1 (09876)

Report on the work of the candidates

Using the Internet and Email

Many candidates performed well in this task. Candidates were required to produce a screen dump showing the search that they had carried out and create the required email message. However, a number of candidates lost marks for failing to:

- provide evidence of the search criteria or used incomplete search criteria and, in some cases, providing only the evidence found
- spell the search criteria key words accurately
- include an appropriate subject line in the email to describe what the email was about. The majority of candidates accurately entered the recipient's address and included the information found within the email. Candidates should ensure that emails prepared include all standard elements, for example the subject field content is appropriate.

Producing a Presentation

Candidates selected appropriate software and scored well in this task. When presenting information candidates are required to evaluate the selection, use and effectiveness of ICT tools and facilities used to present information, for example, consider the location of combined information and how this information is presented. However, a number of candidates lost marks due to the following:

- adding other text to the presentation, apart from the text provided and the text supplied in the question paper, or editing the text provided; this was not necessary
- the text was not presented in a consistent manner; ie the slide headings were not all formatted consistently and different to the body text
- additional images were included
- additional material, supplied in the question paper, to be added to the presentation was not entered accurately.

Using ICT to Perform Calculations and Produce a Chart

Candidates were required to perform some calculations and produce a chart on a subset of the data. Most candidates attempted the calculations and the chart. However, a number of candidates lost marks due to the following:

- failure to show that they used ICT to carry out the calculations eg use of onscreen calculator or use of formulas
- errors in the logic in the formulas eg cell references or arithmetical operators
- no formula printout was included to show that formulas had been replicated
- not all the required calculations were performed
- values calculated were not formatted appropriately eg number of decimal places
- new values did not have suitable labels in an appropriate location
- column widths were not wide enough to display all of the information
- the type of chart produced was not the type specified in the question paper
- a chart title was omitted, or if a title was included it was not meaningful
- the values were not appropriately labelled
- the legend was not meaningful for the data charted
- spelling errors in the labels and title.

Protecting Data

Candidates were required to protect the data in a specified file. Evidence of protecting the original data file or protecting the data within the spreadsheet package was acceptable. A higher proportion of candidates evidenced this than in previous papers. The majority of candidates provided evidence of accessing the password facility and entering a password. In a small number of instances, candidates protected the structure of the spreadsheet file and this does not protect the data within the spreadsheet.

File Management

Candidates were required to provide evidence of file management. In some cases the filenames included 'task 2' etc. The concept of meaningful filenames appears to be problematic for many candidates. Files should be saved with meaningful filenames for all tasks. Filenames should relate to the scenario and the filenames should clearly indicate the content of the files. Filenames such as Task 2 do not indicate the content of the files in a meaningful manner.

Guidance for Centres

- Centres are provided with two versions of the data files by OCR. Candidates should be provided with the version that they have been prepared to use (ie either the .doc or the .txt version of the files).
- Candidates are not required to produce a narrative describing step by step how the tasks were completed.
- Centres should ensure that printouts are of an adequate quality to be read.
- Candidates should ensure that screen dumps are of a legible size.
- Candidates must use appropriate search techniques to locate and select relevant information. (See skill standard 1.5 on page 19 of OCR Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates should be able to select suitable information from sources found. (See skill standard 1.6 on page 19 of OCR Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates should be able to use communications software to meet the requirements of a complex task. (See skill standard 1.9 on page 23 of OCR Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates should be able to perform calculations and produce charts. (See skill standard 1.8 on page 21 and skill standard 1.10 on pages 23 and 24 of OCR Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates should be able to effectively combine information within a presentation. (See skill standard 1.9 on pages 22-23 of OCR Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates should be able to demonstrate security practices. (See skill standard 1.4 on page 19 of OCR Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates should be able to manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval of information. (See skill standard 1.3 on page 18 of OCR Deliverers' Handbook)
- Ensure that all staff delivering the qualification are familiar with the content of the OCR Deliverers' Handbook. This can be found on the OCR website http://www.ocr.org.uk/download/sm/ocr_52248_sm_fs_del_hb.pdf
- Sample assessment material is located on the OCR website. Candidates should be familiar with such materials.

Functional Skills Information and Communication Technology Level 2 (09877)

Report on the work of the candidates

Using the internet

This task was generally well done. However, a number of candidates lost marks for failing to:

- provide evidence of the search they carried out to find the information required (eg a screen dump showing search criteria used in a search engine)
- use a search string that included all the appropriate key words to make their search more efficient
- select a street map that showed only the immediate area
- select only the information that was required.

Using ICT to perform calculations, to find and select information and display numerical information in appropriate graphical format

Most candidates produced a solution using ICT. The main reasons candidates lost marks are shown below.

- Some candidates failed to construct the formula(s) required accurately, including the use of absolute cell references where appropriate.
- Some candidates failed to provide evidence in the form of formula printouts. Some did not print the spreadsheet showing all the formulas used and lost the mark for replication.
- Many candidates selected incorrect data to chart with some charting all of the data.
- Charts were not accurately labelled with axes labels, axes titles, chart title and meaningful legend if required.

Using ICT to organise information and analyse a data set

- Many candidates failed to add a new field to the data in order that the additional information could be recorded.
- Most candidates filtered the data although some used only one of the two criteria.
- Most printed their list including the column that contained the discrete information that was the basis of their filter; this should not be included.

Combining information to produce an information sheet

Although the majority of candidates combined the relevant pieces of information with the text provided, very few candidates achieved full marks.

- A few candidates altered or added to the text provided.
- Many failed to insert the various pieces of information in appropriate locations within the information sheet text. Many inappropriately inserted all the required information at the end of the text.
- Few candidates added a relevant title at the top of the information sheet.
- Many failed to arrange the various pieces of information in the document carefully, which led to a lack of balance in the document. Line spacing was not balanced. Screen shots inserted into the information sheet had not been cropped so that they contained only the information required.

File management and using email

- Most candidates created a new folder. However, few named it with a meaningful folder name (ie one that indicated the contents of the folder).
- Most moved the files created into the new folder but again some failed to use meaningful file names (ie ones that indicated the content of the file).
- Most prepared an email but failed to enter a subject for the email. Those who did enter a subject for the email failed to give due thought to what that should say (eg something about the information sheet file).
- Most candidates attached the required file to the email.

Guidance for Centres

Candidate success appears to be very centre dependent. Issues appear to be that:

- candidates have not presented evidence in valid, efficient formats, eg
 - by using a formula printout to show evidence of formulas used in a spreadsheet,
 - by using a screen dump of the search criteria used in a search engine,
 - by using a screen dump of a final email.
- while centres are provided with both versions of the data files by OCR, candidates should only be provided with the version that they have been prepared to use (ie either the .doc version of the files **or** the .txt version of the files).

Skills that need to be developed are detailed below.

- Candidates need to demonstrate that they can select and use only the information that is required. (See Skill Standard 2.5 on page 30 of OCR's Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates need to learn how to use ICT for a complex data handling task by processing and analysing numerical data, displaying numerical information in graphical format and using appropriate fields to organise data so that it can be filtered/queried, etc. (See Skill Standard 2.7 on pages 32-34 of OCR's Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates need to learn appropriate layouts for different types of documents. (See Skill Standard 2.9 on pages 35-37 of OCR's Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates need to learn to evaluate their use of ICT tools when presenting information. (See Skill Standards 2.6 and 2.10 on pages 30-32 and page 37 of OCR's Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates need to learn that an email should contain a suitable subject so that the receiver knows what the email is about. (See Skill Standard 2.9 on pages 34 of OCR's Deliverers' Handbook)
- Candidates need to learn to use folder and file names that explain the content of the folder or file. While the use of file names such as "Task 2a" helps the candidate identify the files they have used in the test, it does not demonstrate their ability to name files effectively outside of a test situation. (See Skill Standard 2.3 on page 29 of OCR's Deliverers' Handbook)
- Screen dumps should be of a legible size.
- Centres should ensure that printouts are of an adequate quality to be read.

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