

Functional Skills

ICT

Level 1 ICT - **09876**

OCR Report to Centres 2013-2014

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

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.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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The qualifications and standards

- **Structure and content**

Centre Assessment:

External assessment

Centres should ensure that their candidates are prepared with the skills required. The OCR's Deliverer's Handbook for this scheme can be accessed on the OCR website.

A small number of instances have occurred where examiners have reported suspected malpractice. For example, a printout has been submitted with the name of another candidate on the printout, candidates appear to have accessed the internet for Part B of the assessment or candidates appear to have taken the assessment over a period of time exceeding the time allowed.

Administration/Documentation:

Uploading mark sheets to Interchange

The majority of centres are doing this in a timely manner with a few centres not uploading the marksheet delaying the marking process for the batch of scripts

OCR Support and Resources:

OCR Materials

These are available on the OCR website and on the CPD Hub.

Assessment Summary:

The tests present candidates with "open response" tasks. This means that there will be a variety of acceptable responses to any task.

Task	Guidance on acceptable evidence	Common problems with evidence
Search the internet for specified information	Screen dump of the search criteria that were entered into an internet search engine	A small number of candidates fail to provide evidence of the search criteria they entered into a search engine to find the website on which they found the information and lose a number of marks.
Perform calculations	Printout of the data including the calculated values AND a formula printout showing all formulas used	A significant number of candidates do not provide a formula printout. Some candidates provide a screen dump showing the formula they have used in a particular cell. They will lose some marks because the evidence does not clearly show that they have used formulas in all

Task	Guidance on acceptable evidence	Common problems with evidence
		<p>appropriate cells and/or that the formula has been replicated.</p> <p>Some candidates type out the formula they have used. Candidates will receive no marks for this approach as there is no evidence that they used ICT to tackle the task.</p>
Organise files as required	Screen dump(s) showing folder(s) created and the files it contains sized appropriately so that folder and filenames can be read	Most candidates provide a screen dump of their file management. However on a number of occasions it has not been sized appropriately and folder and filenames cannot be read clearly.
Prepare an email for sending	Screen dump showing email prepared sized appropriately so that email addresses and the subject line can be read	Most candidates provide a screen dump of their email. However on a number of occasions it has not been sized appropriately and email addresses cannot be read clearly.

Throughout the tests this year there have been a number of areas with which some candidates have struggled and have, therefore, lost a number of marks. The following table provides guidance on these areas.

Criterion	Evidence presented that has lost marks	Guidance for improvement
1.1 Identify the ICT requirements of a straightforward task	<p>Most candidates perform well in this skill area.</p> <p>A small number of candidates fail to achieve all the marks for this criterion by failing to perform a calculation in a spreadsheet or combine relevant information in a presentation, for example.</p>	<p>Candidates should be able to understand a straightforward task and work out how they can use ICT effectively and efficiently to help them carry out that task.</p> <p>Materials are available in the support materials section of the webpage for this specification. Candidates may find it beneficial to use such materials.</p>
1.2 Interact with and use ICT systems to meet requirements of a straightforward task in a familiar context	<p>Most candidates are able to use appropriate software and use features within the software to carry out the task.</p> <p>Candidates sometimes lose marks when transferring data from a data file to a software application for a task, for example transferring data into a spreadsheet or a presentation.</p>	<p>Candidates should be able to copy and paste text effectively between software packages.</p> <p>Candidates should be able to check that all text has been copied, for example, use of copy and paste. It should not be necessary for a candidate to amend any data, for example change spelling or the order of any text, unless specifically instructed in the task.</p>

Criterion	Evidence presented that has lost marks	Guidance for improvement
1.3 Manage information storage	Most candidates provide a screen dump of their information storage. If a folder has been created this may not have been given a meaningful name. Often candidates lose marks because they have not saved files using meaningful filenames or have failed to save files in an appropriate file format.	<p>Candidates should learn to organize files within a folder structure and use folder names that clearly indicate the content of the folder.</p> <p>Candidates should learn to save files so that the filename clearly indicates the content of the file. While using a naming system such as Task 1 etc. might help them manage their way through the test it does not provide evidence that they can name files appropriately so that a third party could clearly see what the file contains.</p> <p>Although OCR provides data files in a particular format, candidates should take care to save the files they have created in an appropriate format (eg as a spreadsheet).</p>
1.4 Follow and demonstrate understanding of the need for safety and security practices	Many candidates do not outline how to minimise the risk of computer viruses.	Candidates need to focus on the verb(s) related to risks associated with computer viruses. For example, buying antivirus software will not minimise risks whereas using antivirus software will.
1.5 Use search techniques to locate and select relevant information	When using a search engine to find information on the internet candidates do not always use efficient search criteria.	Candidates need to be taught to use efficient search criteria in an attempt to easily locate the information required. For example, using partial search criteria and then attempting to locate the required information is inefficient as it is likely that several links will have to be followed to find the required information.
1.6 Select information from a variety of sources for a straightforward task	Most candidates provide a screen dump of the website that contains the information they have found. However a number of candidates lose marks because the screen dump provided does not contain all the required information or showed the information required "by chance".	Candidates should take care that any printout they provide of the information found clearly shows the particular information required and shows all of it clearly. If using a screen dump candidates need to check the size of their screen dump and use cropping tools if required.

Criterion	Evidence presented that has lost marks	Guidance for improvement
		The use of map websites is not necessarily the most efficient method of obtaining a map to show the location of a particular property or building as this may be more easily obtained from an alternative website about the building or property.
1.7 Enter, develop and refine information using appropriate software to meet the requirements of straightforward tasks	Most tests require candidates to use text/data provided. It is important that the data is not changed unless instructed within the test. A small number of candidates lose marks for failing to include all the text/data provided or for making unnecessary changes to the text/data.	Candidates should make sure that they carry out the task set for them within the test and only make amendments or additions that would be appropriate for the task. They may have to add a heading but would never be required to compose text for the task set.
1.8 Use appropriate software to meet requirements of straightforward data-handling task - <i>process numerical data</i>	Most candidates make a reasonable attempt at processing numerical data provided. However, some candidates fail to present new data appropriately. For example they fail to present monetary values as currency to 2 decimal places. Many candidates fail to enter appropriate labels to explain the values they have calculated.	Candidates must consider the new values they have calculated and format them appropriately. Candidates must add labels to explain any new values they have calculated so that it clear what the spreadsheet is about to a third party. Such labels must be in an appropriate location, be meaningful and spelt accurately.
1.8 Use appropriate software to meet requirements of straightforward data-handling task - <i>display numerical data in a graphical format</i>	Most candidates provide a printout of the type of chart specified. However, the majority of candidates lose some marks because they fail to use titles, labels and legends appropriately.	Candidates need to be taught the need to add appropriate titles and labels to charts. Candidates should be taught how to use the software to add such titles and labels. Candidates need to be taught what a legend is and how it should be used appropriately on particular types of charts.
1.8 Use appropriate software to meet requirements of straightforward data-handling task – <i>enter, search, sort and edit records</i>	Most candidates make a reasonable attempt at handling records. However, some candidates fail to search data effectively, in some cases deleting records which do not meet the search criterion.	Candidates need to be taught how to search records using a single text, numeric or data criterion and / or the relational operators =, <, >, <>. If a list is produced candidates should be taught to include a title to explain what the list contains.

Criterion	Evidence presented that has lost marks	Guidance for improvement
<p>1.9 Use communications software to meet the requirements of a straightforward task</p>	<p>A small number of candidates do not attempt email tasks. This may be due to a lack of resources as outlined above.</p> <p>Of those who do attempt these tasks many lose marks for entering email addresses incorrectly or for failing to use an appropriate subject for the email or any subject at all.</p>	<p>Candidates must enter email addresses accurately.</p> <p>Candidates must make sure that they always enter an appropriate subject into the subject field of an email. An appropriate subject is one that clearly indicates what the email is about.</p>
<p>1.10 Combine information within a publication for a familiar audience and purpose</p>	<p>Most candidates demonstrate that they can combine information within a publication. However most candidates lose marks for failing to combine that information effectively.</p> <p>A large number of candidates fail to check any data they enter for accuracy and meaning.</p>	<p>Candidates need to know the features and uses of types of publication (eg use of presentation slides, use of a letter).</p> <p>Candidates need to make sure they combine information so that the information is clear to the audience (eg positioning of information on a poster, font size of text)</p> <p>Candidates need to use software facilities effectively to make sure they manage the margins, line spacing and alignment of the information they combine.</p> <p>Candidates should use sizing and cropping facilities to make sure that screen dumps or images inserted are clear and do not contain unnecessary information.</p> <p>Candidates must make sure they enter standard information within a publication that has not been supplied (eg date, address, salutation etc on a letter).</p> <p>Candidates must use software facilities to check the accuracy of any text they add to publications.</p>

Criterion	Evidence presented that has lost marks	Guidance for improvement
<p>1.11 Evaluate own use of ICT tools</p>	<p>Most candidates fail to fully review their work to check that it fit for purpose and lose marks accordingly.</p>	<p>Candidates should make sure that they have used page breaks appropriately for the text provided.</p> <p>In a presentation candidates should ensure that text is split across an appropriate number of slides.</p> <p>Candidates should review the way they have presented information so that is clear to the audience what the information means eg use a table to present information about opening hours on different days, check column widths are appropriate so that information can be clearly read.</p>

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