

Information and Communication Technology

Level 1 09876

Level 2 09877

OCR Report to Centres

June 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 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. Emails prepared by candidates should ensure that all standard elements are included, for example the subject field content is appropriate.

Producing a Flyer

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 flyer, 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, eg the sub-headings were not all formatted consistently and different to the body text and the title was not emphasised
- images that were not appropriate for the flyer were included
- additional information, supplied in the question paper, to be added to the flyer was not entered accurately.

Using ICT to Perform a Data Handling Task

Candidates were required to produce lists based on a subset of the data. Most candidates attempted this task and produced lists. A number of candidates lost marks due to failure to:

- select the correct subset of data; in some instances records were missing
- include a title for each list, so that the purpose of the list was apparent
- make some selection relating to the fields to display on the list. Many candidates included all the columns of information.

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 seemed to be the case 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, which does not protect the data within the spreadsheet.

File Management

Candidates were required to provide evidence of file management. Most candidates evidenced a folder they had created although this did not always have a meaningful folder name. In some cases the filenames included 'task 2' etc. The concept of meaningful folder names and 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 effectively filter data and give it an appropriate title. (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 publication. (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)
- It is important to 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 reasonably well done. 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 map that was a visitors' map and not merely a location map
- select only the admission prices for adults and concessions.

Using ICT to perform calculations

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

- Many candidates failed to calculate all the required values. Many omitted to calculate the overall total.
- Some candidates failed to construct the formula(s) required accurately.
- Some candidates failed to provide evidence in the form of a formula printout. Some did not print the spreadsheet showing all the formulas used and lost the mark for replication.
- Most candidates used label(s) for the new value(s) they had calculated. Some did not accurately describe the value(s).
- A few candidates failed to format the new value(s) calculated appropriately.

Using ICT to produce organise information and analyse a data set

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

- Many candidates failed to add a new field into the data file in which the new information could be recorded.
- Most candidates searched the data file using only one of the required criteria.
- Few candidates gave any consideration to what the appropriate details would be in the list produced, eg did not remove fields/columns that contained discrete data used for filtering.

Combining information to produce a newsletter

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

- A few candidates altered or added to the text provided.
- Many inserted items additional to those requested. In some instances candidates added two maps as they had not made a selection. Many candidates had indicated a selection of admission prices in Task 1 but then inserted all admission prices into the newsletter.

- Few candidates acknowledged the source of the map they had used in the newsletter.
- Many failed to insert the various pieces of information in appropriate locations within the newsletter text. Many inappropriately inserted all the required information at the end of the text.
- Many failed to arrange the various pieces of information in the newsletter carefully, which led to a lack of balance in the document. For example, very few made sure that line spacing was consistent, many failed to crop screen dumps to ensure they were appropriate for a newsletter.
- Few candidates entered all the information that would be appropriate for the newsletter as shown in the examples in the Resource Booklet, ie name of event.
- Few candidates emphasised the sub-headings in the text provided. Of those that did a few did not emphasise them consistently.

File management and using email

Candidates were required to set up an email distribution list and prepare an email. Few candidates achieved full marks. The main reasons candidates lost marks are shown below.

- Many candidates failed to set up an email distribution list as requested. It appeared that many candidates were unsure how to use such a facility.
- Many candidates made errors in the email addresses entered.
- A number of candidates 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 be.
- Few candidates named the newsletter file with a meaningful filename.

Guidance for Centres

Candidate success appears to vary from centre to centre. 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 or printing a copy of the email message.
- 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 (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 how to set up and use an email distribution and that an email should contain a suitable subject so that the receiver knows what the email is about. (See Skill Standard 2.8 on page 34 of OCR's Deliverers' Handbook)

- Candidates need to learn to use file names that explain the content of the 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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