OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

ELC

Computing

Entry Level Certificate **R353**

OCR Report to Centres June 2014

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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.

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

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General Comments:

This was the second year this qualification has been awarded and the first in which a significant number of candidates have been entered.

A range of candidates appeared to have been entered for this qualification; some centres used it as an introduction to Key Stage 3 pupils, some to differentiate where students in a cohort are not ready to access GCSE pass grades and some as an entry point to the subject for students with special educational needs.

The overall standard of work submitted was high with the majority of centres applying the assessment criteria accurately.

The Internal Assessment Criteria forms were used well and many centres provided useful annotation to show how marks were awarded.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Strand One: Hardware, Software and Logic Tests

A few centres failed to initially include copies of the tests in their sample meaning they had to be subsequently requested. It is important the tests are included along with the other two strands (either the papers themselves or scans on CD/memory stick). Where candidates have retaken a test, only the test with the mark that is being counted towards aggregation needs to be included.

The overwhelming majority of tests were marked accurately.

Two questions caused a small number of problems.

- Question 5, Paper 1 Section A

'Shelby wants to use a computer to record herself singing. What input device should she use?'
As an alternative to the answer on the mark scheme ('microphone') 'video camera' should also be accepted. Just the word 'camera' on its own, however, would not be accepted.

- Question 7, Paper 1 Section A

'State the purpose of RAM'
Some candidates gave correct answers other than the one on the mark scheme ('Stores programs or data currently being used'). Any alternative, correct answers such as 'Provides a temporary storage faster than the hard drive' should be given credit.

Strand Two: Programming

The text based and Scratch task options were equal in popularity.

A small number of centres devised their own tasks. This is perfectly acceptable but centres are reminded it makes moderation easier if a copy of the task candidates are set is included in the sample. In these cases it is the responsibility of the centre to ensure the task enables the candidates to access all of the assessment criteria.

For visual languages such as Scratch and Kodu, where different parts of code are stored under different sprites, candidates should be reminded that they need to give evidence of all relevant code.

Different approaches were taken to planning. Some of the most successful were those candidates who listed the key objectives of their program and modelled its behaviour in a flowchart.

When testing, candidates must provide some evidence that they have carried out the tests (e.g. a screenshot or video). It should be noted that testing isn't expected to provide rigorous proof the program works in all circumstances, as might be expected at GCSE, but should be enough to establish whether or not the program does what the candidate has suggested it should in their planning.

Where writing is likely to prove a challenge for candidates, centres are reminded that video and audio submissions are an acceptable way for candidates to share the planning and testing of their programs.

Strand Three: Trends in Computing

Candidates chose a good variety of topics. The best projects tended to be those where the candidate clearly had a genuine interest in the subject matter.

Topics covered included development of:

- Mobile phones
- Games consoles
- Social networks
- Television

In some centres it was clear all candidates had undertaken the same research topic and worked with prompt sheets. In these cases when marking it is important to note this would constitute working '**with constant support'** making the lowest band marks most appropriate.

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