ELC

Computing

Entry Level Certificate **R353**

OCR Report to Centres June 2015

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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:

Once again a wide range of centres and candidates entered for the Entry Level Certificate in Computing. It has allowed KS4 students not yet ready to access GCSE to gain a recognised qualification in computing and has also been used to prepare KS3 students for the GCSE course.

Many centres are now sending work on CD or memory stick rather than as bulky printouts – this is very much appreciated. Relatively few centres are making use of the Repository and more are encouraged to consider this quick and hassle-free method of submission.

Most centres this session submitted candidates' tests with their samples though a few still needed reminding, having to subsequently send it to the moderator.

The Internal Assessment Criteria sheets are being used well by centres. Most used them to provide useful commentary to work for the *Programming* and *Trends in Computing* strands which is of great help with the moderation process. Centres are encouraged to also use the comments box to indicate, where relevant, the amount of support a candidate has been given.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Strand One: Hardware/Software/ Logic Tests

Candidates seem much better prepared for the test component with a good number scoring over 20/24 across the three. A small number of candidates didn't complete all three tests. Whilst individual circumstances sometimes mean missing a test is unavoidable, centres are reminded they have a high degree of flexibility over when they set tests, and where at all possible candidates should have the opportunity to sit all of them.

The tests were generally marked very accurately this year. Centres were much more consistently crediting correct variations of answers to open questions and not accepting invalid answers.

Question 8 on PAPER 1 – SECTION B – SOFTWARE looking at spyware was occasionally marked incorrectly.

8. Phil has anti-spyware software on his computer.

What does anti-spyware software do?

Answers to this question must be specific to spyware, those discussing viruses get no credit. On the other hand, those that talk about how it will prevent programs that steal data without specifically using the word 'spyware', should still get the mark.

Strand Two: Programming

The Riddles and Diamond Miner tasks were by far the most popular this year with roughly an equal proportion of centres attempting each. The vast majority of centres complete the text based programming task used Python.

At the top end there was some high quality code with candidates showing the programming skills needed to embark on GCSE Computing.

The Planning section tended to be slightly over marked. Candidates scoring in the top band should have clear evidence of how their program will work (usually pseudocode or a flowchart). For full marks this description will have no significant errors.

In some cases there was a reluctance to award full marks for the Use of Techniques and Outcomes sections. If a candidate has independently produced a solution that fulfils the criteria in the question they should be awarded full marks for Outcome. NB, unlike GCSE there is no expectation for the program to be robust, for example input data does not need to be validated. A fully working solution will by necessity use most of the required techniques and so if independently produced should also score full marks for the Use of Techniques section.

A number of candidates are failing to give evidence of their program running. When discussing whether or not their program works and the testing they carried out, this should be backed up with evidence, usually in the form of screenshots or video.

Strand Three: Trends in Computing

Most projects tended to focus on the usual themes:

- Mobile Phones
- Video Games
- Social Media

Candidates should not feel confined to these topics. Centres are reminded that the scope of what can be covered by this section is ever changing. For example, since this specification was written smartwatches have become mainstream devices and Virtual Reality has made significant leaps forward.

A small number of centres tried awarding higher marks than the work submitted warranted, supplementing it with comments suggesting the candidate has a better understanding than they are able to express in writing. Marks can only be awarded based on the evidence provided and in such cases centres are recommended to make an audio or video recording of the candidate discussing their chosen topic.

Whilst most centres are submitting presentation printouts, a few submitted videos as evidence for this strand. These had clearly taken a lot of time and effort to produce but very much deserved the high marks they were awarded.

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