

Functional Skills

ICT

Level 1 ICT - **09876**

OCR Report to Centres September 2017

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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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CONTENTS

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Content	Page
Functional Skills ICT Level 1 – 09876	4
1. Overview:	4
2. General Comments	4
3. Comments on Individual Units	6
4. Sector Update	7

Functional Skills ICT Level 1 – 09876

1. Overview:

Centres should ensure that candidates are prepared for the Functional Skills Task with the skills and knowledge required. The OCR's Deliverer's Handbook publication identifies the range of skills and knowledge required for this scheme and it 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 or candidates appear to have accessed the Internet for Part B of the assessment.

The majority of centres are administering the tests in a timely manner with a few centres not uploading the mark sheet delaying the marking process for the batch of scripts. When a centre is entering a number of candidates on the same day for a test, it is beneficial if all of the candidates are entered as a single batch rather than each candidate being entered as a separate batch.

The uptake for the on-screen tests has increased in the past year.

Resources for centres are available on the OCR website and on OCR's CPD Hub.

2. General Comments

There are instances where candidates do not appear to be fully prepared for the demands of the test as little evidence is presented or the evidence presented by candidates demonstrates limited understanding of the demands of the specification.

The assessments 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. The screen dump should be large enough to allow the examiner read the search criteria entered by the candidate.

Task	Guidance on acceptable evidence	Common problems with evidence
Perform calculations	Printout of the data including the calculated values AND a formula printout showing all formulas used	<p>A number of candidates do not provide a formula printout.</p> <p>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 appropriate cells and/or that the formula has been replicated.</p> <p>A small number of candidates type out the formula they have used in another part of the spreadsheet or in a separate document. Candidates will receive no marks for the formulas used with this approach, as there is no evidence that they used ICT to tackle the task.</p> <p>For on screen tests it is acceptable to upload the spreadsheet containing the calculations, as long as a common software application has been used.</p>
Presenting information	Print the publication, for example a flyer	For on screen tests, if the candidate has used desktop publishing software to create a publication, this should be saved as a pdf file and the pdf file uploaded. This will prevent issues relating to examiners being unable to open the publication if they do not have an appropriate version of the software application.
Organise files as required	Screen dump(s) showing folder(s) created and the files it contains, sized appropriately so that the folder name 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 the folder and filenames cannot be read as the information is too small to read.
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 address(es) or subject line cannot be read.

3. Comments on Individual Units

Throughout the tests this year, there have been a number of areas of the specification which some candidates have struggled with and have, therefore, lost a number of marks.

Criterion	Evidence presented that has lost marks
<p>1.1 Identify the ICT requirements of a straightforward task</p>	<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>1.2 Interact with and use ICT systems to meet requirements of a straightforward task in a familiar context</p>	<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 and not all of the data has been transferred into the software application.</p>
<p>1.3 Manage information storage</p>	<p>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 by some candidates. 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>
<p>1.4 Follow and demonstrate understanding of the need for safety and security practices</p>	<p>Many candidates do not outline why a password on a file is a strong password.</p>
<p>1.5 Use search techniques to locate and select relevant information</p>	<p>When using a search engine to find information on the internet candidates do not always use efficient search criteria.</p>
<p>1.6 Select information from a variety of sources for a straightforward task</p>	<p>Most candidates provide a screen dump of the website that contains the information they have found. However, some candidates lose marks because the screen dump provided does not contain all the required information.</p>
<p>1.7 Enter, develop and refine information using appropriate software to meet the requirements of straightforward tasks</p>	<p>Most tasks 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.</p>

Criterion	Evidence presented that has lost marks
<p>1.8 Use appropriate software to meet requirements of straightforward data-handling task - <i>process numerical data</i></p>	<p>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 with 2 decimal places. Many candidates fail to enter appropriate labels to explain the values they have calculated or fail to present labels that are presented consistently with existing labels.</p>
<p>1.8 Use appropriate software to meet requirements of straightforward data-handling task - <i>display numerical data in a graphical format</i></p>	<p>Most candidates provide a printout of the type of chart specified. However, the majority of candidates lose some marks because they fail to use meaningful titles, labels and legends on the chart.</p>
<p>1.8 Use appropriate software to meet requirements of straightforward data-handling task – <i>enter, search, sort and edit records</i></p>	<p>Most candidates make a reasonable attempt at handling records. However, some candidates fail to search data effectively, in some cases deleting records that do not meet the search criterion.</p>
<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. Of those who do attempt these tasks, a small number of candidates lose marks for entering email addresses incorrectly or for failing to use an appropriate subject for the email or any subject at all. Most candidates attempting this task provide evidence of attaching a file or files, if required by the task.</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, many candidates lose some marks for failing to combine that information effectively. Candidates need to consider the use of white space in documents and ensure that presentation of the types of information is balanced.</p> <p>Some candidates fail to check the data they enter for accuracy and meaning.</p> <p>Where the task requires the candidate to produce a letter, few candidates include all of the standard elements of a letter, for example the date, or use appropriate salutation and complimentary close in the letter.</p>
<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>

4. Sector Update

The availability of onscreen assessment for Functional Skills ICT has been welcomed by centres, with more availing of the opportunity to use this assessment component. Full details relating to onscreen assessment are available on the OCR website in the 'Functional Skills ICT guide for centres' document.

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