Teacher Support Materials

Exemplar Responses

GCSE Business and Communication Systems

OCR GCSE in Business and Communication Systems J230

Contents

1　Introduction

It is important to make the point that the Teacher Support Materials play a secondary role to the Specification itself. The Specification is the document on which assessment is based and specifies what content and skills need to be covered in delivering the course. At all times, therefore, this teacher support should be read in conjunction with the Specification. If clarification on a particular point is sought then that clarification should be found in the Specification itself.

OCR recognises that the teaching of this qualification will vary greatly from school to school and from teacher to teacher. With that in mind, these Teacher Support Materials are offered as guidance.

2 Unit A265: Businesses and their Communication Systems

Question 2e

Every Friday the head office network manager makes a back-up copy of the data stored on the head office network. The unencrypted data is then loaded to a remote storage location on the Internet.

How useful is this method of backing up the head office computer data? Give reasons for your answer.   [4]

This question is taken from the specimen assessment materials.

Question Context/Content/Style

This question tests the ability of candidates to evaluate a given scenario on the basis of their analysis of relevant knowledge.

High Level 2 Candidate Response

This is not a good idea because the data is backed up only once a week so more recent data could be lost if the network crashes or the hard drives fail on a Thursday. It would be better to make a back-up every night so there was less chance of important files being lost.

Examiner's Commentary

The candidate offers an overall assessment of the method and an analysis of some of its drawbacks. Although no benefits are analysed, an improvement to the method is offered and justified. This is a high level 2 response.

Low Level 2 Candidate Response

This back-up system is not very effective. There is only a weekly back-up which means that up to a week's worth of data could be lost if the network crashed on a Thursday. Also, sending the data on the Internet in an unencrypted form is a poor idea as it makes it easier for a hacker to make use of the data if it is intercepted while being uploaded.

Examiner's Commentary

The candidate offers a clear analysis of some of the drawbacks of the method. However they do not discuss any benefits, and they do not offer any improvements. This is a low level 2 response.

High Level 1 Candidate Response

This is not a good idea because once a week isn't very often and the on-line storage firm might go bust and lose the data.

Examiner's Commentary

The candidate gives two reasons why the back-up method is not very effective. However they do not offer any analysis, or any improvements. This is a high level 1 response.

Question 3bi

Ascobury Stores Limited only keeps electronic copies of letters sent.

Explain **two** benefits to Ascobury Stores of only keeping electronic copies of documents.   [4]

This question is taken from the specimen assessment materials.

Question Context/Content/Style

This question tests the ability of candidates to apply and then explain relevant knowledge.

High Level Candidate Response

Benefit 1: Electronic storage systems take up less space than paper-based systems. This is because a computer can store hundreds of thousands of letters which would need a large room full of bulky filing cabinets to store them in.

Benefit 2: Paper-based documents can get easily lost or damaged when removed from a filing cabinet; this is because paper is flimsy and easily damaged. Electronic copies are less likely to get damaged, especially if a back-up copy is kept.

Examiner's Commentary

The candidate makes two valid points which are both explained. This is a high level 2 response.

Mid Level Candidate Response

Benefit 1: Letters stored on a computer can easily be edited to make new ones. This makes creating letters quick and easy.

Benefit 2: Storing letters on a computer means that more than one person can view a letter at the same time. With paper copies, once a letter has been removed from a filing cabinet, the other person has to wait for it to be put back before they can read it.

Examiner's Commentary

The second point is valid and is explained. The first point is valid but the explanation refers only to the benefits as being "quick and easy"; to be a creditable explanation these terms would need to be justified, e.g. it is quicker than creating a new letter from scratch or easier because the existing letter could be copied and only the parts that are different need to be changed. This is a mid level response.

Low Level Candidate Response

Benefit 1: Electronic copies take up less space than paper copies.

Benefit 2: They can also be used as proof that the letter was sent, in case there are any problems such as a communication not being received by a customer. This will help to improve customer service.

Examiner's Commentary

The first point is a valid benefit of storing documents electronically compared with paper storage. However it is not developed. The second point is explained but is not a valid benefit of an electronic storage system, so cannot be credited. This is a low level response.

Question 3c

Ascobury Stores Limited has a policy that all letters are checked for errors before they are sent.

Assess the usefulness of this policy to a business such as Ascobury Stores Limited.　　　[6]

This question is taken from the specimen assessment materials.

Question Context/Content/Style

This question tests the ability of candidates to offer an overall assessment of a given situation, by discussing benefits and drawbacks. In addition, the quality of written communication is taken into account when awarding marks.

High Level 3 Candidate Response

I believe that this policy is generally good for the business. It will improve the quality of documents, with fewer spelling or grammar errors and there is less chance of misleading or incorrect information being given to customers. This will improve the firm's corporate image and reduce the chance of expensive mistakes which need to be put right. Even though the system will be expensive, as senior employees will need to spend time checking documents produced by others, I believe that in the long run the business will perform better with this policy. However, it would be better if they could appoint better qualified staff, and train them so that they didn't make mistakes in the first place! This might be hard to achieve though.

Examiner's Commentary

A balanced overall assessment of the benefits and drawbacks of the policy is made, and this is based on reasoned analysis. The conclusion offers some circumstances in which the policy might not be needed but the candidate then judges this to be unlikely. The quality of written communication is very good, with no obvious errors. This is a high level 3 response.

High Level 2 Candidate Response

There are benefits of checking letters:

- there will be fewer spelling mistakes in letters sent to customers, so the business will have a good corporate image

- letters will have fewer errors, such as incorrect information. This can sometimes be expensive to put right, so not making mistakes could save the business money.

A drawback is that someone has to be employed to check the letters. This will be expensive and will increase the firm's costs.

Overall it is a good idea as the benefits outweigh the costs.

Examiner's Commentary

Two valid benefits and one drawback are given and all three are explained with some analysis in terms of corporate image/business costs. Although there is an attempt at an overall assessment, this is simply a conclusion which is not supported by any reasoning and so is not evidence of achieving level 3. The quality of written communication is of a good standard, with no obvious errors. This is a high level 2 response.

High Level 1 Candidate Response

There are benefits of cecking letters for errors befor they are sent:

- their wont be eny misteks

- they get more custmers

There are sum problems:

- takes time to reed them

- the checker mite get it rong

Examiner's Commentary

A number of valid points are given, however none are analysed and the candidate's quality of written communication is very poor. This is a high level 1 response.

Question 4e

Assess the impact on business organisations such as Ascobury Stores Limited of complying with health and safety legislation. [6]

This question is taken from the specimen assessment materials.

Question Context/Content/Style

This question tests the ability of candidates to offer an overall assessment of a given situation, by discussing benefits and drawbacks. In addition, the quality of written communication is taken into account when awarding marks.

Low Level 3 Candidate Response

Health and safety legislation has a big impact on supermarkets. There are a number of things they have to do to follow the law. These include keeping an accident book and ensuring that equipment is safe to use. The firm will employ a number of health and safety staff to make sure the laws are being followed. This costs a lot of money, but it is better for the firm to do this than suffer the consequences of breaking the law. This includes being prosecuted, fined and even closed down. It may be expensive to implement health and safety legislation, but it is better than the alternative.

Examiner's Commentary

There is an overall assessment of the impact of health and safety legislation that is based on some limited analysis of the consequences of following the law. The quality of written communication is good. This is a low level 3 response.

Low Level 2 Candidate Response

Health and safety has a big impact on businesses such as Ascobury Stores Limited. The staff who sell cheeses and meat need to use knives and other dangerous equipment. The firm needs to make sure this equipment is safe to use. Otherwise, if there was an accident they could get sued by the employee and the health and safety people could close the business down. This would be expensive for the firm.

Examiner's Commentary

A limited number of points are made. However there is some good application to the business and there is some development/analysis. The quality of written communication is good. This is a low level 2 response.

Low Level 1 Candidate Response

Health and safety legislation is good for employees because:

•   it keeps them safe at work

•   they have fewer accidents

•   they get to have free eye tests

However it is bad for them because they have to carry out the law and look out for the safety of other workers. If they don't do this they can get sued.

Examiner's Commentary

A number of points are made, however they relate to the impact on employees, not the business, and so cannot be awarded any marks. The quality of written communication is of a reasonable standard and this can be credited even though the response fails to answer the question set. This is a low level 1 response.

Question 5bii

Assess the impact on a business such as Ascobury Stores Limited of taking action to reduce its impact on the environment. [6]

This question is taken from the specimen assessment materials.

Question Context/Content/Style

This question tests the ability of candidates to offer an overall assessment of a given situation, by discussing benefits and drawbacks. In addition, the quality of written communication is taken into account when awarding marks.

Low Level 3 Candidate Response

There will be some benefits to the business of this and some costs.

The costs include the money spent recycling products. The firm may also have to use less packaging, whilst good for the environment, as less is thrown away, this might make products last less time, and so more is thrown away, this will cost the business money as some products will not get sold before they go off. On the other hand customers think better of the firm as its doing its bit for the planet and so they will shop there more often spending more money and making more profit. Overall taking care of the environment is expensive for businesses as they have to be more careful about what they do, however it will help them in the long run as if the environment is destroyed then the might not be able to stay in business!

Examiner's Commentary

There is a good analysis of the positive and negative impact on the business and an overall assessment which is based on valid reasoning. Level 3 is justified. However the quality of written communication is only adequate. Therefore this is a low level 3 response.

Low Level 2 Candidate Response

There will be a big impact on the firm. First of all they will have to stop giving customers plastic bags. Customers will not be happy about this as they will have to bring their own bags. Second they will have to cut down on waste packaging. The firm will have to recycle more waste. Recycle bins will take up space and will be expensive. Customers may not like the bins getting in the way. They might shop elsewhere. Overall the business will lose out but the environment wins.

Examiner's Commentary

A number of points are made however there is limited analysis of the impact on the business. The point about plastic bags is developed but only to give the impact on customers not the firm. There is some disjointed development of the impact of having more recycling bins. We can just accept that the loss of customers will be a valid impact of this on the business. However the final sentence is not a valid assessment of the overall impact on the business as it is not developed and is partly focused on the environment, not the business. This is a low level 2 response.

High Level 1 Candidate Response

The impact on the firm of cutting environment waste are:

- need to have recycling bins

- give away less plastic bags

- spend less on packaging

- save the planet

- customers like the business more

- can advertise how good they are

- might make more profit

- might increase costs

- more people shop there

Examiner's Commentary

A number of points are made. However some relate to the impact on the wider environment, not the business. None of the points are developed. The candidate has a range of relevant knowledge but as there is no analysis, level 2 cannot be awarded. The quality of written communication is poor as there are no developed sentences. This is a high level 1 response.

3 Unit A266: Developing Business Communication Systems

Scenario 1 – Task 2 - Candidate Response

This task is taken from the specimen assessment materials.

e Refrigeration Limited

01344 567890

December 16th 2008

Dear Supplier

We are writing to you to explain some changes we are making to the way we communicate with you.

At the moment, if you need to contact us, you telephone our main reception and they put you through to our purchasing department. As some of you know, this can be a problem at certain times of the year when we get very busy. So, from next month we will have a dedicated telephone number for our purchasing department. All calls to this number will be answered by one of our buyers, and if they are all on the phone you will get the option to wait or leave a message which will be heared by the buyers.

This suggestion was made to us by one of our customers and we are happy to put it into action.

The benefits to this will be that you will get to spend less time waiting for a buyer to speak to you leaving you more time to do your work. This should make you more productive. We also think you will be more likely to do business with us if we can offer you a more professional service. So we all benefit.

The new number for this service is ████████ and it will be available from January 12th.

We hope you find this new service to be helpful. If you have any questions please contact me on the number at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely
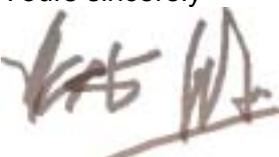
Communications Director

Scenario 1 – Task 2 - Examiner's Commentary

Summary of marks

Content

The candidate has produced a single-page letter. This limits the amount of detail they can include, but they have summarised the changes effectively. However, the benefits to the supplier are not explained in detail but the attempt to 'sell' the proposals is largely successful. Overall a best fit mark in Band 2 is appropriate.

Document

The letter applies some appropriate layout features and conventions however it is of below-professional quality. For example, a consistent fully blocked open punctuation style has not been applied. The addressee's details have not been included and the sender's details are right aligned rather than tabulated. The business has supplied its postal address and telephone number but not other contact details such as an email address or a fax number. However, the opening and closing paragraphs of the body text are of a good quality and the overall tone of the letter is appropriate.

Overall a best-fit mark in Band 2 is appropriate.

How this performance could be improved

The candidate could move in to Band 3 by explaining in more detail how the improvements will benefit the suppliers. They could also achieve Band 3 marks for the document by consistently using an appropriate business layout using standard business conventions.

Scenario 2 – Task 1 - Candidate Response

BCS at the ▮▮▮▮▮ **Leisure Centre**

Terms of reference
I was given the following information by the Director at ▮▮▮▮▮:

"I would like you to investigate the ways in which our leisure centre communicates with our existing and potential customers and make recommendations for how our systems and/or communications can be improved. You should present your work to me as a formal business report. You will have up to ten hours in which to design, carry out and analyse research for this project and up to five hours to produce your written report and leaflet."

Introduction
In this report I will present the results of my research into how my local leisure centre, ▮▮▮▮▮, communicates with its customers. I will recommend one way that this can be improved.

I chose ▮▮▮▮▮ because it is based at my school, and my mum uses it some evenings to play badminton. My mum works away from home a lot but does not always know from one week to the next when she will be away. Last year she needed to cancel a booking but couldn't because the leisure centre staff wouldn't answer their phone. As a result she had to pay a cancellation fee and she wasn't too happy about that.

Evidence

(a) ***Describe the main features of the communication systems the leisure centre uses to communicate with existing and potential customers.*** **[6]**

▮▮▮▮▮ uses three main systems to communicate with its customers: telephone, Internet and computers to create documents.

There is one telephone in reception. It is operated by the person at the desk. When they get busy they don't have time to answer the phone. When staff are too busy to answer the phone the phone switches to an answer phone after ten rings. When the leisure centre is shut the answer phone comes on automatically.

They also have a website. This is operated by the council so the leisure centre staff don't have to maintain it. It gives basic information about the leisure centre such as where it is and when it is open. It also gives a telephone number for how to phone them. It has the following main pages:

- Opening Times and Prices
- Activities
- Clubs
- Kids Zone
- Booking Information

The website address is: http://www.▮▮▮▮▮-leisure.co.uk/CentrenbspLocator/▮▮▮▮▮.

The first part of the address tells you that the website is hosted by ▮▮▮▮▮ Council – they operate the site for all the lesire centres in the area.

The leisure centre have two computers which they use to create leaflets such as opening times and special events – the use Word to create these documents and then email them to the council to get them printed. One of the computers has a database on it that stores details of all the bookings for sports such as badminton and table tennis. The database program was written by someone from the council and it is used in all the local centres. It uses Access. The computers are protected by a password that only the lesire centre staff know. They told me that it gets changed every two weeks and is a real pain to remember. This helps to keep out unauthorised users such as hackers as the database contains a lot of personal data and they have to keep data secure because of the Data Protection Act.

(b) **Describe the main messages and media which the leisure centre uses to communicate with existing and potential customers.** *[6]*

The website has basic information on it – the main purpose is to let people know what the leisure centre does – but as soon as they visit they know that anyway. My mum doesn't use the website as she has the number on her mobile, and she knows where it is.

At the centre you can pick up leaflets that tell you whats on – they give information such as swimming times and what nights you can play badminton. They are quite basic because all they are doing is providing information. They also have some other leaflets that try to persuade people to do more exercise and keep fit. These are more exciting and colourful because they are tryiing to persuade and motivate people to do stay healthy.

The other main media used is face to face and telephone conversations. You can phone up the centre and ask for advice and information as well as booking events – you can also do all this in person at reception. When staff answer the phone they are supposed to always give their name – this is so the customer knows who they are speaking to. Aparently they don't always do this though.

(c) **Analyse the capabilities and limitations of the existing systems used by the leisure centre to communicate with existing and potential customers.** *[6]*

The website is very limited. It just gives basic information about the leisure centre such as where it is and what you can do there. Some pages, for example the one for kids, doesn't have anything on it at all – it just says "coming soon" – its been saying that for months! Another proble is you can't download any information – for example at another lesiure centre website you can download the swimming times as a PDF leaflet.
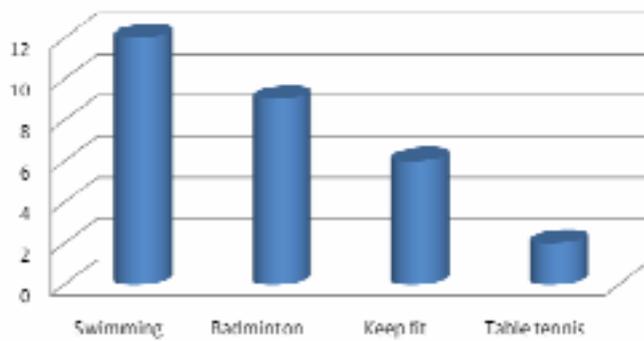
Apart from the missing pages, there's nothing actually wrong with the website – its just a bit basic and boring – its designed to give information, and it does that – its just that the information is a bit basic.

I think the fact that you can't get up to date information about events and times from the website and you have to contact the centre direct is a big drawback. People these days are very busy and they don't always have time to phone them and ask for information or drive to the centre and pick it up. Aparantly they used to post information to people but this was stopped because it was too expensive.

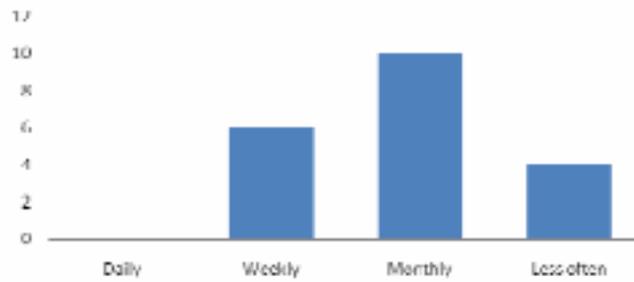*(d)* **What do customers think of the communications received from the leisure centre and what recommendations for improvement do they make? Why do they want these improvements to take place?** *[6]*

I did a questionaire and asked twenty people who use the leisure centre what they thought of it. Some of the result questions are shown below:

What facilities do you use?

(Bar chart)
- Swimming: ~12
- Badminton: ~9
- Keep fit: ~6
- Table tennis: ~2

How often do you use the leisure centre?

(Bar chart)
- Daily: 0
- Weekly: 6
- Monthly: 10
- Less often: 4

Do you use the website?

(Pie chart)
- Yes 22%
- No 78%
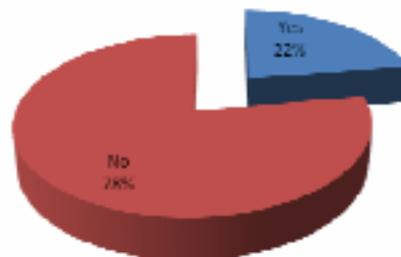
Would you like to able to do the following on the website?

(Cone chart)
- book events: ~12
- cancel events: ~10
- download leaflets: ~10
- watch videos: ~2
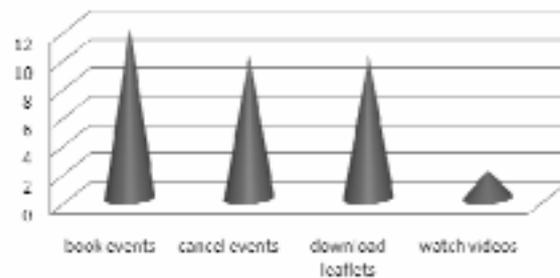
As you can see, most people don't use the website. This ties in with my mum who said that she doesn't use it anymore as she already knows what's on it. Interestingly, most people wanted to be able to make bookings online and then cancel them. Fewer people wanted to download leaflets - when I asked some of the people why this was they said that they could collect them at the leisure centre anyway as they went there so often – and that is cheaper than printing them yourself.

Most people wanted to be able to make bookings on-line. When I spoke to people they all said the same thing – it can be too inconvenient phoning the centre or making a booking when you are there. Most people said that they had problems phoning the centre, sometimes there was an answerphone message and they couldn't be sure if their message would get listended to. Three people said that in this day and age it should be possible to make bookings online.

Recomendations

(e)   What recommendations would you make for improvements in the way in which communication takes place between the leisure centre and its existing or potential customers? Explain why you are making these recommendations.   [6]

I am recomending that the leisure centre sets up an online booking system. They should also make all their leaflets avavilable to download on-line as well.

I am making these recomendations for the following reasons:

- most of the people I asked said they wanted to be able to book on-line. They also wanted to be able to cancel bookings on-line as well.
- Although I didn't interview anyone who doesn't use the centre, I think that one of the reasons they don't use it is that its too inconvenent to visit the centre or phone them to make a booking.
- when I looked at other leisure centre websites I found that loads of them already let you book on-line. None of the centres in ▮▮▮▮▮▮ do this however and its time they did.
- even though fewer people wanted to download leaflets, about half did – and I guess that more people would visit the centre if they could find out more easily what is going on there

Conclusions
(f)   What impact will these changes have on the leisure centre and its customers? Why is this?   [9]

The leisure centre will need to set up a secure booking system – they will need to make it possible for visitirs to the website to be able to enter details into the database. This is easily possible as many other businesses do this, including lots of other sports centres. The website will have a link to a booking form which will tell the customer if there are any free slots and lets them make a booking – you'll have to be a leisure centre memebr to do this – and have a username and password. They will need things like a permananet internet connection and a firewall – this basically keeps unauthorised users off the database.

The booking system will cost money to set up and run – but this will be less if all the leisure centres in ▮▮▮▮▮▮ start to use the same system. In any case, I think it will result in more bookings being made, so it will earn them more money and they should make more of a profit.

Customers have said they want the changes – so they will be happy. Nobody actually said they would use the centre more if the system was running – but I'm sure they would. Some of my friends also said they might start using it if they could book online so that's another good thing about it.

Bibliography and resources
Textbook - GCSE Business Communication Systems for OCR
▮▮▮▮▮▮ Leisure Centre website
Questionnaire
Interviews with my mum and other users of the leisure centre

To book you need to be a registered member of our leisure centre—you will then be given a username and password.

To register for the service please visit http://www.██████-leisure.co.uk/CentrenbspLocator/ ██████/tabid/368/Default.aspx. Or call in and see us at reception!

We take your data very seriously and follow the Data Protection Act.
Look for the padlock symbol on your browser software when using this service.

Remember to keep your log-on details secure!

██████ **Leisure Centre**

Leisure Centre

Scenario 2 - Examiner's Commentary

Task 1

Activity (a)
The candidate identifies three different systems used by the organisation, and some of their features are described in detail. A mark in Band 2 is appropriate.

Activity (b)
Three media for messages are identified and clearly described, however some of this lacks detail. Overall a mark in Band 2 is appropriate.

Activity (c)
Some strengths of the website are identified and briefly described. Some of the drawbacks are analysed but this lacks detail or application of relevant theories. Overall a mark in Band 1 is appropriate.

Activity (d)
Some opinions of relevant users were obtained through a questionnaire. Their comments have been summarised and to some extent justified. Overall the analysis is weak and a mark at the bottom of Band 2 is appropriate.

Activity (e)
The candidate makes a number of recommendations that are justified with reference to the survey data and the candidate's own opinions. The level of analysis of the improvements themselves is weak. Overall a mark at the bottom of Band 2 is appropriate.

Activity (f)
There is some detailed analysis of the impact of the proposed changes, with a limited assessment of their possible impact on the organisation as a whole. Overall a mark at the bottom of Band 3 is appropriate.

Report
A report format has been used. There is some evidence of text formatting (though a fully justified paragraph layout and wider line spacing would be more appropriate) and graphs/charts have been inserted. The written style is less formal than would be expected in a formal report and there are noticeable spelling and grammatical errors. Overall a mark at the top of Band 2 is appropriate.

Task 2

Content
The leaflet format chosen by the candidate enables them to include some text but this is limited. As a result they include relevant information but it is lacking in detail. However, the attempt to 'sell' the proposals is largely successful. Overall a best fit mark in Band 2 is appropriate.

Document
The document is well thought out and the content is appropriate. A range of images and colours are used to support the overall theme and house-style of the organisation. However it is below-professional quality. Overall a mark in Band 2 is appropriate.

How this performance could be improved

The candidate has produced a competent piece of work. To improve further they need to demonstrate more detailed understanding of the systems used by the organisation together with a more detailed analysis of their strengths and limitations. A more detailed rationale for the improvements suggested by the relevant stakeholders needs to be given together with a more detailed rationale for their recommended changes that are supported by reasoned argument and evidence. The overall impact on the organisation needs to be analysed in more detail.

The documents produced are competent, but are below professional quality. To improve further the report needs to be written and formatted to an appropriate formal standard. Similarly, the leaflet needs to include more detailed information for the customers and the overall 'look and feel' needs to be more professional.

4 Unit A267: ICT Skills for Business Communication Systems

Task 2

You realise that it would be more appropriate to use the mail merge facility to produce the letter in Task 1. The Theatre Manager, Jack Setchfield, is not aware of the term 'mail merge'.

CREATE a new Word document. Using the correct layout, write a memorandum to Jack Setchfield, assessing benefits and drawback to The Palace Theatre of using the mail merge facility to produce this letter.

SAVE the file as **MEMORANDUM** and **PRINT** one copy.

For the layout and format of the memorandum   [7]

For the assessment of the benefits and drawbacks of using mail merge   [12]

This task is taken from the specimen assessment materials.

Question Context/Content/Style

This task tests the ability of candidates to: use their ICT skills and understanding to create a specified document (in this case a Memorandum); and to use their knowledge and understanding of ICT to assess the benefits and drawbacks of a particular piece of software (in this case the mail merge facility within a word processor).

High Level Candidate Response

Memorandum

To: Jack Setchfield, Theatre Manager

From: A Student, Marketing Manager

Date: *<candidate inserts the date of the examination>*

Subject: Benefits and drawbacks of using Mail Merge to create letters

I understand you have never used Mail Merge before. Here are some of the reasons why you should.

There are a number of benefits of using mail merge. Using mail merge saves time compared with writing each letter individually; this is because all the user has to do is create the standard letter and then merge in the personalised information from a database. There is less chance of getting the customer's details wrong because if they are correct in the database then they will be correct in the letter. On the other hand there are drawbacks. Mail merge makes it easier to send out junk mail which wastes paper and some customers don't like to receive it. However, mail merge is overall a useful and easy to use business tool that many businesses use because it saves them time and money compared with creating individual letters.

Examiner's Commentary

Layout and format of memorandum:

The memorandum is correctly laid out. All seven required items are present.

Assessment of the benefits and drawbacks of using mail merge:

The candidate identifies and then analyses a number of benefits and drawbacks. There is then an overall assessment of the impact of mail merge. However this is not fully applied to the business. A mark at the lower end of the level 3 range is appropriate.

Mid Level Candidate Response

Memo

To: Jack Setchfield

From: A Student

Date: *<candidate inserts the date of the examination>*

Subject: Here are the reasons why you should use mail merge. It is a very quick and easy way to create lots of letters. This is because you type the basic letter in word and then take the different bits such as the person's name and address from the spreadsheet and it goes straight into each letter. This means you won't make any errors. The biggest problerm is that its difficult to use. Your employes might need training. Overall its definitely something you should use.

Examiner's Commentary

Layout and format of memorandum:

There is a heading stating the document is a memorandum. The memorandum is addressed to Jack Setchfield however his job title is omitted. The memorandum is from the candidate but their job title is omitted. The date is correct. There is space for a subject line but none is given, instead the body text of the memo begins where the title/subject should appear.

Four of the required items are present.

Assessment of the benefits and drawbacks of using mail merge:

The candidate develops one benefit and one drawback of using mail merge. However the analysis is weak. There is an attempt at an overall conclusion/assessment however this is not supported by any evidence or reasoning so it is not evidence of achieving level 3. A mark towards the lower end of the level 2 range is appropriate.

Low Level Candidate Response

Dear Jack

Mail merge is easy. You type up the letter and then the bits for each customer goes in automatically. You wont make any mistakes as the mail merge does it all for you. Its quiet hard though but you soon get used to it.

Yours faithfully

A Student

Examiner's Commentary

Layout and format of memorandum:

There is no heading stating the document is a memorandum. No other memorandum layout items are present. "Dear Jack" might form part of a letter, but it achieves no credit as part of a memorandum. The candidate ends with "Yours faithfully, A Student". It could be argued that they deserve a mark because they have put their name, however in order to achieve the mark this should in the correct location at the top of the memorandum and should not be part of a complementary close to a letter. There is nothing here worthy of credit.

Assessment of the benefits and drawbacks of using mail merge:

"Mail merge is easy" gains no credit – this is never credited unless it is justified by valid reasoning. In this case the reasoning is not valid as the candidate states incorrectly that mail merge is an automatic process when in fact it requires specific input commands from the user. Despite this misconception at least one valid benefit and one valid drawback are stated. In the absence of any valid analysis a mark in the level 1 range can be considered. A mark towards the lower end of the level 1 range is appropriate.