GCE ICT
INFO3 The use of ICT in the digital world
Report on the Examination

2520
Summer 2016

Version: 1.0
General Comments

Centres are advised to read this report in conjunction with the published mark scheme and the section in the Specification where the performance of candidates at grades A and E is described.

The examination consisted of two parts: Section A - structured questions based on pre-release material; and Section B - questions requiring extended answers. Centres are reminded that all students should be familiar with the pre-release material supplied to them prior to the examination.

SECTION A

The pre-release had been understood by most candidates, many of whom were able to produce good quality answers to the questions in section A.

Question 1

This question was answered well, with many candidates gaining at least two marks. Most were able to provide an example of a back office system and the majority of the definitions submitted showed the expected understanding.

Question 2(a)

Many candidates demonstrated the required knowledge of SaaS and PaaS and gained high marks, demonstrating that the contents of the pre-release had been studied and absorbed. However, some candidates found it difficult to give an accurate description of the PaaS concept, with some choosing to describe IaaS instead.

Question 2(b)

For this question, candidates were asked to explain why the consultants had suggested that a SaaS platform should be used initially. Those candidates who provided answers which simply repeated what was in the pre-release material gained no marks. Candidates only gained marks for providing an explanation as to why the consultants would have made the suggestion.

Question 3

The concept of BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) was well understood by most candidates, who achieved high marks by discussing the advantages and disadvantages from the viewpoint of both employer and employee. Even the weaker candidates, who generally concentrated on cost savings and convenience, managed to demonstrate a reasonable degree of knowledge and understanding.

Question 4

Although the question required candidates to explain how ICT systems could be used to implement a “just in time” operation, a proportion confined their answers to the business reasons and/or the advantages and disadvantages. Few candidates gained high marks.
SECTION B

Question 5(a)
Candidates were asked to match three situations with applicable legislation. Most candidates were able to match the situations correctly, with only a small proportion failing to link “employer accessing employee’s emails” with the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000.

Question 5(b)
Candidates were able to demonstrate a good working knowledge of the DPA principles and most were able to explain relevant procedures, with many achieving full marks. Typically, these candidates identified principles and provided relevant explanations of appropriate procedures.

Question 6
Many candidates displayed a sound understanding of transaction processing systems and management information systems. However, decision support systems were generally poorly described, with few relevant examples.

Question 7
Many candidates answered this question by confining their answers to the time and cost implications of testing large ICT systems. Whilst these were valid issues, the more able candidates were able to take their explanations a stage further by explaining the use of testing techniques appropriate to testing large ICT systems, including test harnesses and volume, performance, network and regression testing.

Question 8
This question was generally answered well and most candidates were able to demonstrate sound understanding and knowledge of linear development methods and the involvement of clients and users at each stage. Some candidates wasted valuable time by describing iterative methods, or comparing iterative methods with linear methods. The more able candidates included examples of client and user involvement in their essays, including observation, interviews, questionnaires and user testing.

The examiners took account of the fact that some text books used alternative naming conventions for some of the stages.

The quality of written communication and essay writing was reasonable, although candidates should be encouraged to practise their handwriting skills and to learn how to use paragraphs.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades
Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks
Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator