A level
ICT
INFO3
Report on the Examination

INFO3
June 2017

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REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION – ALEVEL ICT – INFO3 – JUNE 2017

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 students 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 students, many of whom were able to produce good quality answers to the questions in Section A.

Question 1(a)

This question required students to define client server systems. The better students achieved full marks by stating the functions of a client and a server and describing how these work together. The majority of students achieved two marks or lower, with some confining their answers to descriptions of networks.

Question 1(b)

Most students were able to identify at least one advantage or disadvantage, with most concentrating on the disadvantage of a single point of failure.

Question 2

Most students had absorbed the contents of the pre-release and provided adequate answers. Few students gained full marks; typical answers involved the procurement of the hardware, rather than the detailed planning for hardware installation.

Question 3

For this question, students were required to discuss the factors that contributed to a successful project. Students gained marks by discussing obvious key factors such as teamwork, good communication and task allocation. Some wasted time by writing about post project activities, such as maintenance; others merely commented on the need for “strong and capable” project managers, as contained in the question stem.

Question 4

Students were required to discuss the extent of their agreement or disagreement with a statement made in the pre-release. There were some excellent answers in which the students described both structured and iterative methods, discussing the relative merits of each to justify their agreement or disagreement.

Question 5

Students were required to study entity relationship diagrams and name the type of relationship. Most were able to identify each correctly and only a small proportion failed to achieve full marks.
SECTION B

Question 6(a)
Most students were able to identify a system changeover method from the description given. “Pilot running” was the only one that caused any difficulties.

Question 6(b)
Many students wasted time by describing the direct changeover method, rather than explaining the advantages and disadvantages, as required by the question. However, most students gained a good mark by typically explaining the advantages of speed and the possible low cost of a direct changeover. The disadvantages usually mentioned included training and familiarisation issues and the potential risk of a direct changeover, particularly for complex systems in large organisations.

Question 7
Most students understood some of the factors involved in choosing an appropriate support method and used relevant examples.

Question 8
There were some reasonable answers that showed the required understanding of interfaces and the factors that needed to be considered. The more able students provided examples from commercial websites and understood the need to design interfaces suitable for use on a variety of devices.

Question 9
Most students had been well prepared by their centres and demonstrated some understanding of emerging technology and the stage of its adoption. In some cases, marks were lost in the overall essay by too much emphasis on the emerging technology, with little discussion regarding the impact of its adoption on organisations, individuals and society.

The quality of written communication and essay writing was reasonable, and comparable with previous years. However, handwriting this year was particularly poor. Future students should be encouraged to practise their handwriting skills and to learn how and when 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.