



General Certificate of Education

Information and Communication Technology 5521

**ICT3 Coursework: The Use of Generic
Application Software for Task
Solution**

Report on the Examination

2008 examination – June series

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

Candidates are producing good quality documentation making sound use of ICT facilities in presenting their evidence within a report. Many candidates produce solutions to task based problems, but some simply use this module to present a portfolio of skills which do not meet the requirements of the module.

Many centres have shown that they can accurately assess their candidates work and these centres often make well-judged and comprehensive comments on the candidate record forms all of which greatly assists the moderator in their job.

Specification

Some centres still encourage their candidates to attempt systems for this module and also incorporate work from the ICT6 specification. It has been previously stated that the additional complexity required places an additional and unnecessary burden on candidates and they receive no extra credit in the process. Candidates would be better directed to describe the Input, Process and Output needs in more detail. For example, if an invoice is to be calculated and discount given, the candidate must explicitly describe how those calculations are to be carried out. Worked examples can be very valuable in demonstrating such calculations.

Specification marks are sometimes too high for the evidence presented, particularly where the designs could not be implemented by a third party as there were omissions such as formulae or macros for spreadsheets or queries for database solutions.

Similarly with testing where candidates test plans contain too many validation and navigation tests rather than including tests to determine whether the solution will do what it is intended to do.

Implementation

While evidence of the candidate's work can be taken from the testing section and user documentation clear proof is still needed to establish that the solution described has been built and to show what skills and techniques were deployed. For example spreadsheet solutions must clearly show what formulae have been used and the rows and cells those formulae refer to must be clearly documented.

Testing

Poor planning for testing inevitably affected the ability of the candidate to complete and appropriate testing activities.

Where solutions produce hard copy for example an order form then this should be printed in full as intended and not demonstrated by either screen dump or print preview.

It is disappointing to see centres still credit highly work where corrective action has been ignored or is only superficially addressed. For example where candidates refer to cosmetic changes to the format of the data yet ignore fundamental errors in the functionality of their solution.

Testing should take place as the solution is developed and candidates should show the problems that occurred, the steps they took to solve these problems and any subsequent retesting to show success.

Evaluation

Centres do now seem to teach their candidates about the need for suitable assessment criteria and the accuracy of the marking of this section has consequently improved. However, some candidates are still given high marks even though they are unable to comment on weaknesses which are clear in the implementation and testing.

User Documentation

This section continues to be well attempted and in the main accurately assessed. A repeated common fault however is to describe how to use the software package and not the candidate's solution. For example, explaining how to build or change a query in Microsoft Access or create a macro in Microsoft Excel as opposed to explaining how to use the customised parts of the software to complete the task described.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.