INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

> **Paper 0983/11**
> **Written Paper**

Key messages

- Candidates should be advised to read the questions thoroughly and plan their answers carefully.

- Candidates who performed well in this paper used specific and detailed language when replying to 'describe' and 'write down steps' type questions. They also gave a justification of the statements and discussed the arguments for and against.

- Candidates must give the generic names for software rather than the brand name. It is clearly stated on the front page of the question paper 'No marks will be awarded for using brand names of software packages or hardware.'

- If candidates need to expand their answers on to other parts of the question paper or onto extra sheets, they should clearly identify in the original answer space where the extra part can be found.

General comments

The paper gave all candidates an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of ICT using a wide variety of topics. The vast majority of candidates were able to complete the paper in the allotted time, and most were able to make an attempt at all the questions.

When a question indicates a specific number of answers, candidates should only write one answer in each allocated space as only one is marked for each space. Any question inviting the candidate to describe, discuss, explain advantages or disadvantages requires specific detailed points relevant to the questions asked. Some candidates wrote conclusions on the discuss type questions. Conclusions must be reasoned and detailed in order to gain the mark.

A few candidates used tables or a line down the middle of the answer to list advantages and disadvantages in separate sections when answering the discussion questions, producing repeated or shortened answers. This method of answering a question can result in missed points as comparisons are difficult.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a)   Candidates did well on this part of the question with many candidates gaining both marks. Some candidates misread output as input.

(b)   Most candidates were able to gain at least a mark in this question. Some candidates gave the answer hard drives rather than optical devices.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to gain at least two marks in this question. A common error was for the control unit to carry out logical decisions. However, main memory as IAS and the ALU carrying out calculations were generally chosen correctly.

Question 3

(a) Most candidates were able to gain two marks for this question. However, some candidates mixed up switch and bridge, and modem and switch.

(b) Stronger candidates were able to correctly identify routing table.

(c) Many candidates had an idea of how the data was routed but could not describe the process fully. Candidates were able to state that data is sent in data packets or explained this in words. Some candidates thought that data was sent using the internet. Stronger responses clearly described the process of using the IP addresses in the data packets and how this is used in the router to work out the best route to send the data packet. Candidates should be encouraged to give more detail in their answers. Some candidates did not give sufficient detail to gain full marks.

Question 4

(a) Most candidates were able to gain a mark for this question, usually for giving the name 'title'. If a second mark was awarded it was usually for 'target frame'. This question was challenging for some candidates who appeared not to understand the meaning of the head section.

(b) Many candidates were able to gain a mark for this question, but it was a challenging question for some candidates. Although many candidates appeared to understand the meaning of the body section, the issue was in writing the answer with enough detail to gain the marks. As a result, most marks were awarded for the content/information and an example.

(c) This again was a challenging question with only stronger candidates gaining full marks. However, a few candidates gained a mark for identifying that a class name starts with a dot. Some candidates wrote about styles using H1, H2, etc.

Question 5

(a) Most candidates managed to gain at least a mark on this question. Those candidates who understood the key word *evaluate* scored well on this question. Evaluation questions require the candidates to give both positives and negatives, full marks cannot be achieved unless both are given. Most candidates were able to give negatives, but few were able to give positives. It is important in questions of this type that candidates read the question fully before answering.

(b) This part was better answered than **part (a)** with many candidates gaining at least four marks. There were some candidates who misread the question and drew a ticket that was not a printable ticket as it included drop down menus. There were some very good drawings of QR and bar codes. Some candidates redrew a box inside the answer box. This reduced the area that the candidate had in which to answer the question.

Question 6

(a) Many candidates understood that encryption was the process of converting sensitive data to meaningless data, though many thought that data became unreadable. Candidates gained marks for encryption key and decryption key as well as explaining that the data was scrambled.

(b) Please note that due to an issue with question 6(b), full marks have been awarded to all candidates for this question to make sure that no candidates were disadvantaged.

Question 7

(a) Many candidates gained a mark for length check and a few for format check. The instruction in the question for no fields to be repeated was often ignored. A significant number of candidates, including many who answered the rest of the paper well, did not attempt this question.

(b) Those candidates that gave test data usually did well on this question and the concepts of normal, abnormal and extreme were well understood. However, some candidates did not give suitable examples and therefore did not gain full marks.

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Question 8

This question gave a different scenario to the standard explanation of the use of a microprocessor in a control system. Some candidates misread the question and wrote about converting the data using an ADC when the question was about the use of the microprocessor. Many responses clearly identified the use of a pre-set value and how the microprocessor used this value along with the data from the sensor to send a signal to an actuator when needed. Some candidates understood the comparison of the value with the pre-set value but others produced vague answers about what happened next. For example, candidates stated that a vehicle must be slowed down or sped up but could not explain how this was achieved. Weaker candidates explained that the sensor made the changes to the speed of the vehicle or that warnings were given to the driver to slow down or to speed up rather than being autonomous as stated in the question.

Overall, many candidates achieved some good marks on this question and showed a good understanding of how a proximity sensor and microprocessor work together in this situation.

Question 9

Some candidates misread this question answering as though the laptop computer was connected to the internet and had been hacked. The question stated that the laptop had been lost and required a discussion of the methods needed to protect the data stored on the laptop. Some candidates gave one of the correct answers relating to biometrics but used this as their only answer therefore only gaining some of the marks available. There were some good explanations about strong passwords, encryption and biometric passwords.

Question 10

Most candidates were able to gain some marks on **Question 10**.

(a)   Almost every candidate scored marks here with many gaining all of the available marks.

(b)   Almost every candidate correctly identified Japan as satisfying the search criteria.

(c) (i)   Most candidates were able to gain at least two marks from the four that were available in this question. Many candidates were able to explain the function of the COUNTIF formula but had more difficulty in identifying the reason for the $ signs. A few candidates thought that this denoted currency rather than absolute values. Common mistakes were that the formula counted the countries or related to the column rather than the cell reference.

(ii)   Most candidates were able to gain at least four marks on this question. The marking was split between the setting up of the graph and the naming of the title and labels. Most candidates managed a range of marks between the two parts.

Many candidates obviously understood the process of creating and labelling a chart. Some candidates had problems writing the answer in the form of steps to show what they would do if they were creating the chart, and this led to some vague answers. Generally, the correct range and the correct chart were selected. The labels given to the axes and the chart itself were usually correctly chosen.

Question 11

Most candidates were able to gain at least three marks on this question. The difference between technical and user documentation was generally understood. Some candidates were confused about what should go into both. The first three items were generally better understood than the second three.

Question 12

Most candidates were able to gain at least half of the available marks on this question with stronger answers given in **parts (a)** and **(b)** rather than **part (c)**.

(a)   There was a good understanding of the devices used in a VR system with many candidates gaining maximum marks. However, there was sometimes a lack of detail such as '*gloves*' instead of '*data gloves*' or equivalent, and '*mobile phone*' instead of '*smartphone*'.

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(b)   As with **part (a)**, **part (b)** was generally well answered but some candidates gave incorrect answers such as '*brain problems*' as health problems associated with VR.

(c)   This part of the question was not as well answered as **part (a)** or **part (b)** with many candidates focusing on the creation of a presentation rather than how the presentation should be presented for adults. Some answers suggested the use a large font even though the opposite is true as presentations of this type have more smaller text and fewer images.

Responses which identified that the question was asking candidates to describe the features needed to specifically appeal to adults were able to access the full mark range. Weaker responses gave features to have in a general presentation without demonstrating an understanding of the different audience. Many candidates had some knowledge of presentations but were unable to adapt a presentation for a certain audience.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Paper 0983/02
Practical Test A

Key messages

The requirements for doing well in this paper were the ability to:

- distinguish between the typeface categories of serif and sans-serif font types
- distinguish between a page header/footer area and a report header/footer area and understand which is appropriate to use
- format data to match the layout of an image on the question paper
- identify appropriate file names for exported data
- insert fields into a master document whilst maintaining the existing spacing and punctuation
- create presenter notes in a presentation
- produce legible screenshots to capture the required evidence
- use proofing techniques to identify data entry errors, ensure all data is displayed in full and to ensure consistency of presentation
- produce screenshots to show the outcome of an action rather than the skill in process
- follow the instructions on the question paper to include identification details on work before printing.

General comments

Many candidates demonstrated a high level of practical ICT skills and appeared well prepared for this examination. On this paper the word processed document and mail merge task were particularly well done. Formatting data to match the layout of an image on the question paper proved to be challenging for some candidates.

Text to be entered by the candidate as part of a task is displayed in bold on the examination paper. The accuracy of this data is assessed so it must be entered exactly as shown, including punctuation and capitalisation. There were a number of typographical errors in data entry and many of these inaccuracies could have been avoided with more careful checking and proofreading. Good proofing techniques are important and candidates are advised to take time to carefully check the content, layout and presentation of their work. Common errors included incorrect capitalisation, incorrect or missing characters, omission of spaces, additional punctuation and truncation of headings and data in the database reports.

A common issue continues to be the ability to distinguish between the typeface categories of serif and sans-serif font types. These are categories of font type with specific attributes and not the actual names of font styles so will not appear in an installed font list. Candidates must be able to select an appropriate font style for the font type specified; entering '*serif*' or '*sans-serif*' in a font dialogue box is not the correct response. Some candidates apply the capitalised font style *Algerian* to all styles and headings entered. Selecting a font style with extra enhancement such as *Algerian* will be penalised unless that enhancement has been specifically requested on the question paper.

Candidates are required to produce screenshots to evidence the ICT skills that cannot be assessed through the printed product alone. In this session, some candidates printed work that was too small to read even using magnification devices. Candidates must ensure that the printed screenshots are clear and large enough to be easily read with the naked eye. Marks cannot be awarded if the evidence is too small to read. Similarly, some candidates did not achieve marks as a result of presenting screenshots with important elements cropped out.

A number of candidates did not print all of the required tasks, even though they had indicated on the question paper that they had completed them. Candidates should be encouraged to print evidence as it is completed rather than waiting until the end of the examination. It is essential that candidates print their Evidence Document towards the end of the examination time, regardless of whether they have finished all the questions, as this document contains supporting evidence which can substantially improve a candidate's mark.

A small number of candidates did not print their name, centre number and candidate number on some of the documents submitted for assessment despite this being part of the task. Without clear printed evidence of the author of the work, marks cannot be awarded for these pages. It is not acceptable for candidates to annotate their printouts by hand with their name as this is not evidence that they are the originators of the work. Candidates should submit all printouts and cross through any draft versions which are not to be marked. If multiple printouts are submitted without draft versions crossed through, only the first occurrence of each page will be marked.

Centres should not staple work and care should be taken if hole-punching work as punch holes often result in missing letters in report titles which cannot then be assessed for accuracy. Each candidate's work must be submitted inside the original hard-copy Assessment Record Folder (ARF) that has been provided to the centre by Cambridge Assessment. Photocopies should not be used. Please make sure a Supervisor's Report Folder is also completed and included with the candidates' work as this shows the software that has been used and any issues that were experienced during the practical assessment.

Comments on specific questions

Task 1 – The Evidence Document

An evidence document was created and used by most candidates to store screenshot evidence. Occasionally the screenshots were too small or faint to be read, even with the use of magnification devices. Candidates MUST ensure that all text can be easily read with the naked eye. A small number of candidates did not present the evidence document for marking, and others omitted identification details so marks could not be awarded for these pages.

Task 2 – Document

Question 1

All candidates opened the correct file and most saved it with the specified file name. Occasionally it was saved in the original RTF format rather than the format of the word processing software being used and a few candidates did not enter the filename in capitals as shown on the question paper. Screenshot evidence of the save was often inconclusive, showing the save in process rather than capturing the outcome of the file saved in the work area. A screenshot of the folder contents after saving provides the evidence required. The majority of candidates retained the page setup settings as instructed.

Question 2

Headers and footers were usually inserted and aligned as instructed. A few candidates incorrectly spaced their identification details in the header so their name was left aligned, the centre number centre aligned and the candidate number right aligned. An automated field was not always used for the page numbers with the keyed number 1 appearing on every page of the document. Occasionally a page number field was displayed rather than the actual page number and some header/footer items did not align with the page margins on all pages. Candidates who used the built in content control did not always remove superfluous text or placeholders in the header and/or footer areas.

Question 3

The title text was usually entered accurately at the start of the document. A few candidates incorrectly inserted this text below the subtitle text which was part of the recall document. Occasional errors included '*Tamara*' or '*Tarawa*' instead of '*Tawara*' and '*MBT*' instead of '*MTB*'. Capitalisation of the title text was not always as shown on the question paper.

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Question 4

The creation and storage of styles to meet the House style specification was done well by most candidates. Errors included capitalisation or typographical errors in the style names, serif or sans-serif font styles set incorrectly and styles containing additional formatting not listed in the House style specification. Additional formatting is often caused by a new style being based on an existing style which then inherits the formatting attributes of the existing style. To avoid this it is recommended that each new style created is based on the 'default' or 'normal' paragraph style. Several candidates incorrectly keyed '*serif*' or '*sans-serif*' into the font dialogue box which, as that font name does not exist, displayed the default font style. A named font style with attributes of the specified typeface category must be selected and applied. A capitalised font such as *Algerian* should not be used unless an all capital letters enhancement was listed on the House style specification. Screenshot evidence of the *RW-Subhead* style provided details of the settings created for this style and the formatting of all subheadings in the document needed to match these settings. The evidence of spacing before and after each paragraph was often presented as a separate screenshot which was inconclusive as it did not show the name of the style this was applied to. A number of candidates applied formatting directly to the text without providing evidence of creating and saving styles, and a few reproduced the House style specification table by typing this into their document exactly as it appeared on the question paper.

Question 5

The list of styles from the style manager/organiser provided evidence that the styles had been created, named and saved. It was not necessary to show all the attributes set for every style. Any screenshot that showed a list of these style names was acceptable although the style ribbon toolbar often truncated the style names or did not show all the styles. The subsequent style application marks in the document were only awarded if this style list evidenced that the style had been created and saved.

Question 6

The *RW-Body* style had already been created, stored and applied to the body text in the recall document. Candidates were required to modify the body style settings which would automatically update the formatting of the body text in the document without further user intervention. Screenshot evidence needed to show that the original *RW-Body* style had been modified. Rather than modifying the existing style, some candidates created a completely new style or applied the formatting to some text and tried to create a new style based on this formatting. Occasionally the screenshot evidence was too small or had been cropped, removing evidence of modification. When the existing style was modified the italic enhancement was not always removed.

Question 7

The *RW-Title* style was usually applied correctly to the title text. Occasionally there was extra space between the title and subtitle text. Application of the *RW-Title* style was only awarded if the formatting met the House style specification and the style was listed in the **Question 5** style list.

Question 8

Most candidates added their name to the subtitle text and applied the *RW-Subtitle* style to this line of text. Some changed the recall text '*by*' to '*By*' or an extra space was inserted before the colon. Occasionally the style was only applied to the recall text and not the full line, or there was additional space after this line. Application of the *RW-Subtitle* style was only awarded if the formatting met the House style specification and the style was listed in the **Question 5** style list.

Question 9

Most candidates changed the correct text to two equally spaced columns with the correct spacing between the columns. Some candidates inserted the initial column break below rather than above the subheading and occasionally a page break was inserted instead of a section break. Some candidates incorrectly displayed the entire document in two columns and occasionally the last few words were not in the column with the column break positioned in the middle of the last sentence. There were a few instances where the column formatting had been applied in separate sections resulting in the loss of paragraph order and flow.

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Question 10

The application of bullets to the specified text was done well. Any consistent bullet style was accepted. The size of the bulleted text was not assessed. The list was not always presented in single line spacing with a 9 point space after the last item in the list. The bullet indent was often not set accurately with some candidates using the default measurement or indenting the text rather than the bullet 2.5 centimetres from the left margin.

Question 11

Application of the *RW-Subhead* style to the six subheadings in the document was usually done well. The mark was awarded if there was evidence that the *RW-Subhead* style had been created and saved with the formatting of all six subheadings matching the formatting seen in the screenshot evidence for **Question 4**. Occasionally the style applied did not match the formatting set, usually with underline and/or italics applied to the subheadings in the document but not seen in the evidence of the style. A few candidates applied the style to only five subheadings instead of six.

Question 12

The *RW-Table* style was supplied in the recall document and candidates were required to apply this to the table in the document. The style formatting was not always maintained within the table with most issues seen in the fourth column where the text was not fully justified and/or there was additional space above and/or below the text.

Question 13

Most candidates deleted the row and data as instructed. A few candidates deleted more than one row and occasionally the row content was deleted leaving an empty row in the table.

Question 14

The table in the recall document was to be formatted to match the image on the question paper. This proved challenging for some candidates with very few achieving full marks for this question. The formatting of the first row of the table was mostly done well with the cells merged and the title centred over the four columns. Most candidates presented the data in columns 1, 2 and 3 on one line but wrapped the column headings in row 2. Centre aligning the data horizontally in columns 2 and 3 was not done well with candidates failing to centre the associated column headings in row 2. A few candidates also incorrectly included the data in column 1 in the centre alignment. Candidates who attempted the vertical merge in columns 3 and 4, rows 3 and 4, usually did so successfully but many candidates did not attempt this. Very few candidates managed to vertically centre the data as shown on the question paper.

Question 15

Most candidates correctly formatted the title in the first row of the table. A few candidates used a serif rather than a sans-serif font type and some inserted extra space below this heading. Italic enhancement and/or a 14 point font size was not always applied. A few candidates applied the black background to the text instead of the row. Occasionally this formatting was applied to row 2 of the table, not row 1.

Question 16

The table borders were often not within the column width. Most candidates correctly displayed internal and external gridlines with no split words seen on wrapping in column 4. Many candidates did not set 9pt spacing below the table.

Question 17

In most cases the document was well presented, particularly where the styles had been created and applied correctly. This question paper required no integration so spacing between items was generally consistent and the table and bulleted list were rarely split. A few candidates left large gaps between paragraphs for no apparent reason and the columns were not always aligned at the top of the page. Occasionally there was a widow or orphan, most commonly where a subheading had been left at the bottom of a column.

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Task 3 – Database

Questions 18 to 20

Not all candidates attempted the database task but the importing of the csv files, creation of primary keys and relationships between the tables were well done by those that did. The field names and data types were mostly set correctly. The most common error related to the requirement to format the numeric field *KM _Hour* to 2 decimal places. This was assessed in report 1 and a significant number of candidates rounded the data in this field, displaying the values to 0 or 1 decimal place.

Question 21

Most candidates created relationships between the tables but the screenshot evidence did not always confirm that one-to-many relationships had been created. The screenshot was often captured during the process of creating the relationship rather than showing the outcome. A screenshot of the relationship dialogue box would have evidenced the relationship type. The relationship diagram can only be credited if it shows the single and one-to-many infinity symbols confirming the relationship type. Some candidates showed the single and one-to-many infinity symbols but the field list was not expanded so it was not possible to assess which fields were linked.

Question 22

Most candidates entered the new record accurately. However, data entry errors occasionally appeared in '*Susan*' and '*Flater*' and it was not possible to assess the accurate entry of 4.05 if the *KM_Hour* field was not stored and displayed to 2 decimal places. Some candidates incorrectly overwrote the first record in the database (*Marg Padgham*) instead of entering this data as a new record.

Question 23

The first tabular report used fields from all tables and was generally done well by candidates who attempted this question. The report title occasionally contained data entry or capitalisation errors, or displayed additional text such as '*Query 1*' in the title area. A large font size was usually used but the title text was not always black and many used a sans-serif instead of a serif font style as instructed. Occasionally the title was truncated as the text box had not been adjusted to accommodate the larger font. The new field heading was usually entered accurately with only a few candidates omitting the underscore, or making data entry or capitalisation errors. Those that created the new calculated field usually used the correct calculation but did not format this to display as hh:mm:ss. Occasionally this field was displayed as h:mm:ss (5:30:30) or 5:30:30 AM but more commonly as a decimal value. Where the required display is not one of the pre-set formatting options a custom format (hh:mm:ss) can be entered in the format properties box. The search was based on three criterion and this was generally done well. Most candidates managed to find the club names containing *MTB*. The *Age* search was not always accurate with some candidates searching for > 20 instead of > = 20 and a few candidates confusing the greater than (>) and less than (<) operators searching for < 20 or < = 20. Most candidates displayed the correct fields in the report although these were not always in the correct order and many had truncated data in one or more fields. The two field sort was general completed well although a few candidates sorted on *Club_Name* only. Most candidates presented the report in landscape orientation. Identification details were often entered in the report footer so they printed at the end of the report rather than in the page footer, printing at the bottom of every page as instructed. A few candidates omitted their identification details from all pages of the report which could not then be assessed. A number of candidates did not remove the automated date and/or page numbers so only the identification details were displayed.

Question 24

The second report was well done by most candidates who attempted it. Most candidates completed the search successfully although a small number incorrectly searched on the *Club_Position* instead of the *Position* field. The fields were usually displayed in the correct order with data fully visible. The one field sort was well done with only a few candidates sorting in ascending rather than descending order of *County*. The report title '*Winning Club Members*' was occasionally entered as '*Wining Club Members*' and occasionally the title was truncated vertically as the text box had not been adjusted to allow for the font size of the title. Most candidates presented the report in portrait orientation but few candidates fitted the report on a single page as this required some manipulation such as adjusting the row height or making the font sizes smaller. The average calculation was usually done well and positioned under the *Distance_KM* column although this was often not displayed as an integer value. The average label was usually positioned correctly but

occasionally contained capitalisation errors and/or a superfluous punctuation. Not all candidates produced screenshot evidence of the database formula used.

Question 25

Most candidates provided evidence of exporting the correct report in portable document format (pdf). The most common error was not saving this with an appropriate file name. The title of the report was an appropriate file name but names such as **Question 25**, Query 2 or Report 2 were frequently used. A few candidates exported this report in the wrong file type or the file type was not evident. Screenshot evidence often showed the export process rather than the outcome of the file saved in the work area.

Task 4 – Mail merge

Question 26

The mail merge task was done well with many candidates producing error-free work. Most candidates correctly replaced the text and chevrons in the master document with the correct fields from the data source file. The most common errors were not removing all the chevrons, deleting punctuation and spaces between the fields, and removing existing line spaces as the merge fields are inserted. A few candidates replaced the text *Date as Postmark* with a date field which was not assessed.

Question 27

Most candidates replaced the required text with their name and inserted their identification details in the footer of the letter. A small number did not replace the text *Candidate Name* and some incorrectly placed their identification details in the header instead of the footer.

Question 28

The merge selection was based on one search criteria and was completed well. Screenshot evidence of a tick box selection method did not provide evidence that an automated filter had been used. Most candidates set the correct criteria on the *Rank* field of '*less than or equal*' although a few incorrectly set '*less than*'. Some candidates made use of the OR options with '*equals to 3*' OR '*equals to 2*' OR '*equals to 1*'. Any criteria set in the automated filter which produced the correct result was accepted.

Question 29

Most candidates merged and printed the letters as specified. A few candidates printed additional letters which did not match the search criteria. A small number of candidates provided no evidence of the master letter and it was therefore not possible to assess whether mail merge had been used to complete this task. The merge result must match the master document for this merge mark to be credited. On occasions the merge result did not match the layout, spacing and formatting of the master document so, for example, the fields were inserted in the master letter without spaces but in the resulting merged letters the fields had spaces so did not match the master letter. If candidates identify an error after merging they should correct the master document and complete the merge again.

Task 5 – Printing the Evidence Document

Almost all candidates printed their evidence document.

Task 6 – Presentation

Question 30

Most candidates correctly imported the five slides and presented each as a title and bulleted list. Most candidates entered their identification details, slide numbers and logo in the correct position on the master slide so they displayed in the same position on all slides in the presentation. Occasionally the master items were not consistent on all slides, often with slide items in a different position on slide 1. Errors included showing additional items on the master slide, items that overlapped the data on the slides or appeared in a different position on any slide. Built-in slide designs could be used but often applied a different layout to slide 1 so candidates needed to ensure the design chosen met all the master slide requirements. Marks were not awarded where incorrect software had been used such as the RTF file opened, manipulated and printed using word processing software.

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Question 31

The majority of candidates correctly inserted a new slide as slide 1 and applied a title slide layout so the title was larger than the subtitle and both were centred in the middle of the slide. Occasionally the subtitle incorrectly displayed a bullet.

Question 32

Most candidates entered the text correctly. There were occasional errors in the data entry of '*Tawara*' and '*MTB*' and a few candidates omitted '*2020*' from the title. The subtitle text was usually accurate with most candidates entering their name after the text. Occasionally the word '*by*' was changed to '*By*' or an additional space was inserted before the colon.

Question 33

Demoting the bulleted items to look like the image provided on the question paper proved challenging for many candidates. Most managed to apply a dashed bullet to the correct three lines of text but these lines were not always indented and few candidates reduced the size of text or applied italic enhancement. The dashed bullets were often not aligned consistently to the left and had no space between the bullet and text. Instead of formatting the three lines of imported text some candidates re-typed the text and in doing so introduced new data entry errors.

Question 34

Few candidates entered the text and printed as presenter/speaker. Some incorrectly added the presenter/speaker text to the slide as a comment, but most simply typed the presenter/speaker notes directly onto slide 3, either as an additional bullet or in a text box, and then printed this as a full page slide. Occasionally the text was entered in the header/footer area. Where the text was entered correctly as presenter notes it often contained data entry or capitalisation errors, most commonly omitting the space either side of the dash, or the full stop was omitted.

Question 35

Most candidates printed the presentation with two slides to the page. Either portrait or landscape orientation was accepted. A few printed the complete presentation as individual slides and some printed with three or six slides to the page.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Paper 0983/03
Practical Test B

Key messages

- Candidates need a better understanding of the syntax of CSS in a stylesheet.
- Candidates need to understand the importance of following the instructions on the question paper.
- Candidates must ensure that they include their candidate details in the correct place on all printouts.
- Candidates need to take greater care with the accuracy of data entry.
- Candidates need a better understanding of conditional formatting within a spreadsheet and how to evidence this.
- Candidates need to take greater care with the formatting of the spreadsheet, particularly the setting of row heights and column widths to match both the question and the data or labels contained within the cells.
- Candidates need a better understanding of html syntax, particularly in the use of head and body tags.

General comments

Some candidates printed work that was too small to read even using magnification devices. Candidates must ensure that all text can be easily read with the naked eye.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates placed the specified files in the correct folder, although not all candidates displayed the folder name in their screenshot evidence. Fewer candidates included all the specified file details, and file dimensions were not always added to the folder specifications before the screenshot was taken.

Question 2

Most candidates created a web page structure with the correct cells in the correct places but the width of the table data shown in cell A was often placed in the table tag. A significant number of candidates, either manually or through the WYSIWYG software that they were using, overrode this instruction by setting the table width to a different value, usually 100 per cent. Whilst the structure of the table was frequently correct, table cell dimensions were not always as specified in the question paper. Most candidates removed the cell letters and the cell borders as instructed. Some candidates appeared to ignore the information that cell widths allowed for border spacing and removed this spacing with embedded CSS in the html by collapsing the borders separated within the stylesheet.

Question 3

Few candidates set the title for the web page. Many allowed the software's default setting to be visible. Of those candidates who attempted to change this to the specified text, a significant number did not place this within the head section of the page, or the text contained data entry errors.

Question 4

Most candidates placed the logo image as specified but a significant number did not resize this image in the html as specified.

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Question 5

This question was answered well by many candidates although a number introduced typographical errors, especially related to initial capitalisation of words where this was not shown. Most candidates placed this text in style h2, although some added extra classes in the HTML to override the h2 settings from the stylesheet. A few candidates transposed the contents of rows 2 and 3.

Question 6

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates, but a small number of candidates placed the background image instead of the daisy image. A few candidates resized the image but did not maintain its aspect ratio.

Question 7

Almost all candidates completed this step as instructed. Occasionally the text was incomplete. Some did not set this in paragraph style. Some candidates included a link to the n20text.txt file and some included the contents of the n20contact.htm file.

Question 8

Almost all candidates entered the text as instructed, although a few typographical errors were seen and 'updated' was occasionally entered as 'edited'. Most candidates placed their candidate details on a new line. Most candidates set this in style h3.

Question 9

This question was rarely completed well. The four images in row 2 required alternative text which should have been suitable for a text reader to enable partially sighted users to 'hear' rather than 'see' elements on the page. In this case a description of the image was required; many candidates who attempted this used the file names as the alt text.

Question 10

Few candidates set the default target window in the head section of their web page. Of those who did set it (presumably with the aid of their WYSIWYG package) this was set to _blank rather than _self.

Question 11

Few candidates set hyperlinks on both the image and the text, often attempting one or the other rather than both. Of those who set a hyperlink, many of the links to the web page contained file paths which would enable them to work on this candidate's computer but not on others with a different file/folder structure. Few candidates set the correct target window for this hyperlink.

Question 12

Most candidates attached the stylesheet. A number of candidates included file paths in their attached stylesheets which would enable them to work on the candidates' computer but not on others with a different file/folder structure. Some used classes or attached a different stylesheet below this which would override the original attachment.

Question 13

This question proved challenging for a number of candidates. Some candidates created a new stylesheet rather than updating the supplied stylesheet. Few candidates placed the background elements in the body section of their stylesheet. Of those who did, a number did not set the correct background colour as they did not rearrange the colour elements into their RGB components. Some candidates did not use the # symbol to denote a hexadecimal number. Candidates often did not use a single selector thereby increasing the chances of making mistakes when repeating the contents of styles h1, h2, h3 and p. For the text-based styles many candidates attempted the heading styles with some elements correct, but a significant number tried to set the paragraph style as paragraph rather than as style p. Where style p was set, a number of these candidates specified the height of the text in pixels rather than in points. A large number of candidates set the second font style to Helvetica rather than Helvetica Neue. More candidates this series than previous

series included their name as a CSS comment, but there were still a number of stylesheets that contained html elements. A significant number of candidates included their details at the bottom on the stylesheet and not the top as instructed. The stylesheet, browser view of the page were usually included but there were some submissions in an editor rather than a browser and html. Some screen prints were cropped so that the address bar was not visible.

Question 14

Many candidates completed this as specified, but a few did not include the spacing as specified or did not format the data within the header to be right aligned.

Question 15

Most candidates inserted the two new rows at the top of the spreadsheet and merged the cells in row 1. The data entry in this cell was not always as specified, with a number of typographical errors including case errors. The formatting of the spreadsheet to match the diagram was generally performed very well. The few errors or omissions seen included the lack of right alignment in column A, the column widths not resized for F and K, the relative font sizes (despite being given the required point sizes) and merging the correct cells in row 3.

Question 16

This question was performed well by most candidates, but some placed a formula rather than function and others placed inefficient formulae like = SUM(B5 + C5 + D5) where the function element was not used.

Question 17

This question was performed well by most candidates, but some placed a formula rather than function and others placed inefficient formulae like = SUM(G5 + H5 + I5) where the function element was not used.

Question 18

This question was performed well by most candidates, but some placed a superfluous function around the calculation for example = SUM(E5 – J5).

Question 19

The formulae used in this question produced a number of different responses, some correct and others where the wrong text was assigned to the wrong inequality. There were a number of case errors in the text to be displayed, despite these being shown in bold on the question paper. The conditional formatting was more challenging for many candidates; a significant number did not demonstrate any understanding of this and appeared to manually format each cell depending upon the value in it. Where candidates provided screenshot evidence of the conditional formatting, the comparison text often contained capitalisation errors, or the text was truncated. The evidence often did not show the cell which the rules were applied to and the formatting was often transposed so the text **Loss** had white text on a black background instead of back text on a red background.

Question 20

Many candidates completed this as specified, but a few did not use appropriate column widths (especially column M) so the individual formulae and the associated replication could be fully/clearly seen.

Question 21

Most candidates completed this as specified.

Question 22

Many candidates completed this as specified, but a few did not widen the columns to show all the formulae and others did not include the row and column headings.

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Question 23

Many candidates completed this as specified, but a few did not adjust the columns to show all the values and labels.

Question 24

Almost all candidates printed their evidence document which contained all the evidence for the web page as well as the process of establishing the conditional formatting. Without this document most evidence of candidate work would be lost.