

MARKSCHEME

May 2007

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

Higher Level

Paper 3

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1. (a) Define *www*.**[2 marks]**

Answers may include:

- *www* is an acronym for world wide web
- it is a hypertext-based system for accessing information from the Internet
- a collection of web pages (held on servers).

Examiners should be aware that candidates may take a different approach, which if appropriate should be fully rewarded. If in doubt, check with your team leader.

Award [1 mark] for each point up to a maximum of [2 marks] max.

(b) Explain how a *Markup Language* operates.**[4 marks]**

A markup language is a text based language – particularly in web pages. Tags are inserted in the text of the page to tell a web browser or other suitable software how to display the text on a user's screen when they open the page. The coding used can then be interpreted by an appropriate computer program. This type of language means that information is presented in a form that is accessible across a wide variety of hardware and software platforms.

[1 mark]

There is very limited understanding of markup language.

[2-3 marks]

Aspects of markup language are described with some technical background explained at the top end of the band.

[4 marks]

A clear, coherent and detailed explanation of how a markup language operates.

2. (a) Describe *two* hardware or software components other than a PC that are required to access podcasts.

[4 marks]

Answers may include:

- Internet connection/router/modem – a fast internet connection for example broadband
- a web browser – in order to find the source of the podcast / that is able to aggregate podcasts
- RSS aggregator (accept proprietary name of application *e.g.* iTunes, Doppler, iPodder) which is client software that uses a web feed to retrieve syndicated web content such as a podcast
- MP3/MP4 player – podcasts are recordings in an MP3 or MP4 format depending on whether it is just audio. The player allows the podcast to be downloaded and broadcast to the user.

Examiners should be aware that candidates may take a different approach, which if appropriate should be fully rewarded. If in doubt, check with your team leader.

Award [1 mark] for each piece of hardware or software identified up to a maximum of [2 marks]. Award [1 additional mark] for describing the hardware or software in the context of podcasting up to a maximum of [2 additional marks].

- (b) Describe *two* possible impacts on the publishing and broadcasting industry of the development of new media channels such as podcasting.

[4 marks]

Answers may include the following:

- publishers could lose business – as people will read material published online instead of in traditional formats such as newspapers and magazines
- broadcasters are able to provide controversial material – because podcasting is an Internet rather than a broadcast service, it is not regulated by government authorities. This means that podcasts may contain content that is uncensored for language or subject matter
- there has been little copyright enforcement by the performance rights organizations over podcasting – with the increasing popularity of podcasting, more sophisticated software will be released, which will improve sound quality and probably attract greater attention from the performance rights organizations
- opportunities for advertising – as podcasting can reach highly specific consumers in large numbers, it may well be the future for audio advertising.

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Award [1 mark] for identifying a possible impact up to a maximum of [2 marks]. Award [1 additional mark] for describing the possible impact up to a maximum [2 additional marks].

- (c) **With reference to one of the areas of impact in the ITGS course, explain the nature and purpose of a podcast that you have studied as part of your research on the case study.**

[4 marks]

Answers will depend on the podcast. An example of the depth required for full marks is shown below.

The Disney company has developed a podcast called 60 second book review. This podcast is a light-hearted entertainment production aimed at telling you the story of a famous book in under 60 seconds. As such, it would be classified under the “arts, entertainment and leisure” area of impact in the course. The podcast released a different book review in each episode. The purpose of the podcast was to introduce people to the new broadcast media/technology, while also entertaining them and encouraging them to read more widely.

[1 mark]

A brief, vague and generalised response, where the podcast has been identified.

[2-3 marks]

The podcast has been identified and described. The student has attempted to explain the purpose of the podcast at the top end of the band.

[4 marks]

A coherent and well-structured response. The nature and the purpose of the podcast have been clearly explained and the student has linked the podcast to an appropriate area of impact.

3. (a) Read the following stimulus material and then answer the question that follows.

Steve is going on a trip around the world and wants to make a podcast about his travels.

Steve's friend Mark has told Steve to take the following steps in order to produce his podcast.

Step 1 – Develop the audio for the podcast.

Step 2 – Develop a website or find a space on the Internet where you can host your podcast.

Step 3 – Publish the podcast to the Internet.

Examine the issues involved in *one* of the steps recommended by Mark.

[4 marks]

Answers may include:

- In Step 1, developing quality audio can be difficult – in order to develop quality audio you need both hardware to record it and software to digitise it for the web. You need to make sure that the audio file is not too big otherwise it will take too long to publish and/or download but you need to make sure that the file is of sufficient quality to be audible to the user.
- In Step 2 developing a website demands a set of skills – you need to be able to use (and have access to) web editing software to design a web page that people will be able to use. It is sometimes far easier to find a space on the Internet that someone has already created in order to host your podcast. You may also find that you can host it in a place where you have a common interest.
- In Step 3 you really need a fast internet connection if you are going to get involved in podcasting – audio files are generally quite large, if you don't have a fast Internet connection then uploading and downloading files is going to take too long. You should consider making the episodes quite short so that they don't take too much time for you to publish them or for the user to download them.

Examiners should be aware that candidates may take a different approach, which if appropriate should be fully rewarded. If in doubt, check with your team leader.

[1 mark]

There is very little understanding of the step.

[2-3 marks]

One issue is examined at the bottom end of the scale, while more than one issue is examined at the top end of the scale, however, the answer is unbalanced.

[4 marks]

A clear, coherent, balanced and detailed examination of the issues involved in the step chosen by the student.

- (b) Evaluate the following quote from the case study with reference to your own research.

“Whilst the development of new media channels like blogs and podcasts can be perceived as positive from many perspectives, it could be argued that there are considerable dangers in exposing our world to the ideas of anyone without any kind of check or balance.”

[8 marks]

Students are likely to take many alternative approaches to answering this question. There are, however, some key elements that must be included in the answer.

- An evaluation of the positive aspects of podcasting from a social perspective, e.g. freedom of speech, greater access to information, a better understanding of other cultures.
- An analysis of the possible social and ethical dangers of podcasting, e.g. the lack of controls, the validity and reliability of information, the potential for extremist behaviour.
- Use and application of personal research.

<i>Level 0</i>	<i>0 marks</i>	<i>Inappropriate answer.</i>
<i>Level 1</i>	<i>1-2 marks</i>	<i>A brief and general answer. Very limited no reference to social implications. Significant errors and omissions of important information.</i>
<i>Level 2</i>	<i>3-4 marks</i>	<i>A limited, descriptive answer. Some evidence, albeit limited, that some research has been undertaken. Some reference to social and/or ethical issues. Some relevant terms explained. The answer is unbalanced Some understanding of the ways facts or ideas may be related at the top of the band.</i>
<i>Level 3</i>	<i>5-6 marks</i>	<i>An understanding of the specific demands of the question. A coherent and logically structured answer. Personal research is incorporated into the answer. Some social and ethical issues are explored. An attempt to show underlying assumptions and important relationships at the top of the band.</i>
<i>Level 4</i>	<i>7-8 marks</i>	<i>Clear understanding of the specific demands of the question. A detailed, coherent, and logically structured answer. Very good use and application of personal research. A range of social and ethical issues are explored. A balanced evaluation of the social and ethical issues. An appraisal is made at the top end of the band.</i>