

OCR Report to Centres

June 2013

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It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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General Comments

This was the second year of running the new specification. The standard of work was very good from the majority of centres, many portfolios being clear and well presented with a good range of photographic evidence being shown. Where students had been encouraged to clearly label and organise their tasks into separate sections of AO1 (Research), AO1(Planning), AO2 (Practical Use of ICT software tools/Carrying Out), AO2 (Outcome) and AO3 (Conclusion and Evaluation), moderation was made much easier.

Where centres had included cover sheets with annotation explaining how the marks had been awarded, this was very helpful to the moderators. Those centres who attended Inset training were able to pass on good advice to their candidates, and to their teaching colleagues. It is recommended that centres should take advantage of Inset training.

A number of centres are using this new qualification for special educational needs students, as well as to engage and motivate disaffected students.

Candidates showed skills by:-

- researching information via the internet.
- using digital imaging.
- showing skills in using modelling and data handling.
- the creation and manipulation of animation.
- their use of control language software.
- their creation and editing of video.
- providing photographic images to fully promote health and safety

A good standard of practical ICT work was observed in the majority of centres.

Research (AO1)

- In this objective candidates needed to use a source other than the Internet to carry out their research. This objective was generally well answered in accordance with the criteria in the specification. Candidates who also used their internet research, in addition to this other source, clearly evidenced, generally did better. It is evident that good research assists good planning.

Planning (AO1)

- Candidates needed to produce a detailed plan of action, list relevant resources needed, identify appropriate software for the task, and explain why safe working practices are important when using a computer. Where candidates had spent a good amount of time researching their task, generally they produced stronger plans. Some writing frames provided by many centres were also successfully accessed and used by the candidates. Good planning was usually well labelled

Practical Use Of ICT Software (long task) (AO2)

- Candidates needed to show their use of email to receive and send communication including attachments. Whilst this was generally well achieved, the evidence in many cases needs clarity. Candidates also had to use logical methods/techniques to carry out planned work using a range of appropriate software features /formatting tools, this was well carried out, with lots of excellent quality work. They also had to show they could insert text and graphics in appropriate places, which was also well evidenced. Save and retrieve work with appropriate filenames, was shown to be within the abilities of most students.

Carrying Out (short task) task (AO2)

- There was no planning necessary for the short tasks. This strand was assessed largely on the candidate's ability to use the software. Candidates needed to carry out the planned work using an appropriate software application and resources. They also had to show use of logical methods and use of software features in their completion of the task(s). With good plans, the more able candidates showed excellent skills in their use of software features; obviously the better the more they could be followed.

Outcome task (AO2)

- For this task candidates had to produce a relevant and completed outcome to and also show evidence of progression in their task. The first part was generally well achieved, to at least a partial outcome level, and the more able candidates were more than competent in producing a good final outcome. The evidence shown in many cases was quite patchy. Two or three screenshots showing a range of progress would cover this part of the objective.

Evaluation (long task) (AO3)

- Candidates needed to make detailed and relevant comments and draw simple conclusions about their work. In addition they were asked to explain an advantage or disadvantage of using ICT to complete the task, suggest some improvements to the outcome of the task and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different methods of electronic communication. This was a weak area for some centres, with minimal evidence shown. The more able candidates, referred back to their original plans and made statements about its success or failure, and how different implementation could have improved their outcome

Evaluation (short task) (AO3)

- Candidates needed to make relevant comments on the outcome of the task and identify strengths and weaknesses, and suggest relevant improvements. Again the better students had good plans which they could refer back to in their evidence.

Achievement in Practical Communication Task:

- This is the task that is awarded 40 marks. Generally it was completed well, although adequate labelling was sometimes absent. The tasks of Advertising a School Event, Promoting Recycling in School and Promoting Health and Safety in the ICT room, seem to have been well received by centres, with achievement mainly in the top two levels.

Achievement in Short tasks:

- There are six tasks available on the OCR website for centres to use. Additionally centres may choose to write their own short tasks. What was surprising, was the number of centres this year, which opted for the tried and tested tasks of database skills and spreadsheet skills, and on the opposite side the relatively low number of centres that opted for their candidates to complete the video editing or the animation skills tasks. However again, achievement was mainly in the top two levels

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Administration

- As this was the first year of running the new specification it was encouraging to note that the majority of tasks were well organised and well presented with clear labelling and treasury tagged, plastic wallets are not necessary. Please note that Unit Recording Sheets (R441/URS116/117) are required, one per task, attached via treasury tag on the front of the evidence for each task. The Coursework Summary Form (CSF) is an optional form that allows centres to list all of the candidates on one form. Its use is recommended as it is a very useful document for moderation purposes.
- Please note that entry for R441/01 requires the use of the OCR Repository. Entries for postal moderation should be made as R441/02. Details of the entry methods can be found in the specification booklet and on the OCR website.
- Please also note that, for this new specification, the moderator will select the sample. As such, please wait until your centre receives notification of the sample request prior to sending the work. To enable the sample request to be generated, please ensure that the Mark Sheet (form MS1) is sent to OCR by 15 May.

Moderation

- Moderators appreciated the assistance given by centres in clearly marking task cover sheets with centre number, together with adequate annotation of the tasks. The recording of the breakdown of marks on the Coursework Cover Sheets was particularly helpful. Writing frames and prompts were helpful to candidates in forming appropriate responses. On occasions work was slightly over structured by centres, resulting in one-word answers. In entry level, additional teacher assistance is welcomed but marks may only be awarded for work undertaken and completed by the candidate. Many teachers provided good annotation on individual performance showing clearly how much and where assistance had been given

Conclusion

- It is clear that the new Entry Level Information and Communication Technology qualification is providing accreditation for a number of candidates who would not have been able to successfully achieve at GCSE. It provides a valuable course for those with special needs, whilst it also motivates and engages disaffected students.
- Candidates have been given the opportunity to succeed and reach their true potential and produce real quality outcomes and products that they can be proud of.

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