



ELC

ICT

Entry Level Certificate **R441**

OCR Report to Centres June 2014

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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.

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General Comments

This was the fourth year of the new specification.

The standard of marking and work, as expected, was very good from the majority of centres, many portfolios being clear and well presented with a good range of photographic evidence being shown. It has to be stressed however that students need encouraging 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), and where this is the case moderation is generally made much easier. Teachers need to make sure that they annotate the work in the teacher boxes on the URS form(s)

Where centres had included cover sheets with annotation explaining how the marks had been awarded, this was very helpful to the moderators.

It is recommended that centres should take advantage of Inset training.

A lot more 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 need to use a source other than the internet to carry out their research. This objective is generally not well answered in accordance with the criteria in the specification. Candidates who also use other sources, such as libraries, newspapers, clearly evidenced in addition to their internet research, generally do better. It is evident that good research assists good planning.

Planning (AO1)

Candidates need 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 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 is usually well labelled

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

Candidates need to show their use of email to receive and send communication including attachments. Candidates also have 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 have to show they can 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, although much of this has tended to be evidenced by a teacher's signature, teacher witness statements require detailed evidence, in future series.

Carrying Out (short task) task (AO2)

There is no research necessary for the short tasks. This strand is assessed largely on the candidate's ability to use the software. Candidates need to carry out the planned work using an appropriate software application and resources. They also have 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.

Outcome task (AO2)

For this task candidates have to produce a relevant and complete outcome 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, with some annotation, written or typed, would cover this part of the objective. Care needs to be taken in the production of screenshots, as sometimes they are too small to be legible

Evaluation (long task) (AO3)

Candidates need to make detailed and relevant comments and draw simple conclusions about their work. In addition they are also 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. Teachers providing witness statements about their students' evaluation work needs to make more detailed statements than just the statement that their student has completed the evaluation. The moderation team would also like to know exactly how they evaluated their work. This applies to all evaluation tasks.

Evaluation (short task) (AO3)

Candidates need 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 as in previous years, that opted for the tried and tested tasks of database skills and spreadsheet skills, and completed both tasks using spreadsheet software, this is seen as not strictly enabling the candidates to demonstrate positive achievement over a range of ICT tasks. There are a number of inexpensive or free database software packages available which would fulfill the criteria. A relatively low number of centres opted for their candidates to complete the video editing or the animation skills tasks.

Administration

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 and are to be avoided. 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 some 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, this is to be encouraged.

Conclusion

It is clear that the 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.

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.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

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OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

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