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Unit 4 Information Systems within Organisations

Report on the Examination

2007 examination – June series

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General

There were some very good answers to all questions in this session's ICT 4 question paper. Some topics caused confusion amongst a small minority of candidates, but in general, the majority of candidates attempted all questions and many showed good understanding of the topics asked.

Question 1

The majority of candidates managed to gain marks on this straightforward definition question, although some failed to recognise the question as requiring an answer straight from the specification.

Question 2

ICT-related legislation was the question, and most candidates could name at least two areas pertaining to ICT that are covered. At this level of study, it is expected that candidates should know the correct names for relevant legislation. There were a few less well known pieces of legislation offered, all of which were checked and credited, if appropriate. A few candidates did not know what legislation is.

Question 3

Most candidates recognised the Management of Change topic and offered answers. The better candidates identified the 'change' first and then could give an effect, scoring 6 or more marks of the 8 available. Weaker candidates who recognised the topic, gave some answers which were mostly 'effects' rather than changes, so scoring fewer marks. For example, some candidates wrote, 'The new system means that some jobs may not be needed any longer, which might cause employees to be made redundant,' or, 'The new system means that people's daily tasks may change, which may require them to need training for the new tasks.'

Question 4

Part (a) was about training suitable for a particular type of position. Many candidates scored well with thoughtful choices and good reasoning for why their choice was appropriate. A few candidates did not recognise that this was a specific application package for the medical centre, and so did not give good reasons for their choice of method. For instance, suggesting, 'a general evening class,' at a local college would not be appropriate for such a specialised package. Some gave a suitable training method then merely described it, rather than saying why it was appropriate for that position.

Part (b) was answered very well, with most candidates scoring at least half marks.

Question 5

Part (a) was answered well in many cases, although for some there was a bit of confusion over the levels of staff. Job titles were mostly set out in the correct order. As this was a national chain of supermarkets, in this instance, store manager was not an acceptable answer for Strategic level. There was a small minority of candidates who did not appear to know the three levels.

Answers to part (b) were generally disappointing. There were 2 marks available for the definition and 1 for an example of formal information flow in the supermarket chain context. Only a small minority managed to gain all 3 marks and many simply gave an example such as 'business letter' or 'meeting' without any reference to the scenario.

Question 6

The ICT code of practice question was answered quite well, with a full range of marks being seen. Many candidates scored well on this question, but quite a few misunderstood the requirements of the question and did not use the example given in the stem of the question to help them.

Question 7

In part (a), many candidates gained very few marks because they failed to realise that the question was about projects and teams, not about individuals. Only a minority of candidates knew that breaking the project down into sub-tasks led to greater managerial control, and simultaneous work on tasks so that the elapsed time frame is shorter.

Many candidates gained 1 or 2 marks on the three parts of part (b), but seemed unclear about what is meant by the term 'deliverable', or that approval to proceed refers to milestones at each stage of a project, not just the initial go-ahead for the whole project.

Question 8

Some candidates could give three factors in a newly developed system that cause the system to fail, and could clearly describe at least one of them, gaining 4 or more marks. However, many candidates had difficulty with clearly identifying the factor, gaining 1 or 2 marks only for the description.

Question 9

In part (a), most candidates could give three or four characteristics of good information, but many failed to provide a positive in-context example of information provided by an on-line booking company. Many gave data entry examples, which were not relevant to the question.

Most candidates scored in part (b), being able to give at least one benefit to the company and one benefit to the customer of having good information on the company's systems.

Question 10

This essay question provided some good and comprehensive answers, with most candidates attempting to address all four bullet points. The 'risks and threats' and 'preventative measures' bullets were the best answered generally, but some reasonable attempts were made to discuss procedures that would help security, and a few candidates gave some good answers about the detection of security breaches.

Many candidates did not expand well on lists of risks and threats or the lists of measures, and so limited the marks to which they had access. Merely stating the word 'hacking' is insufficient to gain a mark; the same with 'anti-virus', 'firewall' and so on. In an essay, a term requires definition, description, what effect it has and why it would be used. For example, a response such as, 'A firewall could be installed on the network so that any unauthorised attempts to access data on the network would be blocked and highlighted to the network manager,' would gain credit. Discussion about why such data needs protection (the Data Protection Act etc) were credited with a general mark, whilst strictly being outside the remit of the essay.

Quite a few candidates wrote in the style of a report, as requested, but those that did not were not penalised in terms of the quality of their written communication which, on this occasion, was mostly reasonable, although a lot of incorrect spellings and many grammatical errors were seen.

To gain the higher language marks, the response must have structure and relevance, as well as good use of English; paragraphs must be logically and smoothly linked. In this series there were a few instances of paragraphs not being used at all, and a few cases of lists of items being written.

It was pleasing to see that many candidates had written plans for their report. Well-structured reports or essays, with good use of English gained 3 or 4 quality of language marks.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the **Results statistics** page of the AQA Website.