Principal Moderators' Feedback

January 2012

Principal Learning – Information Technology

Level 1 - Controlled Assessments

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General Comments

Each piece of work being submitted for moderation must have a Candidate Record Sheet attached. The CRS should be fully completed with centre details (name and number) candidate details (name and number), signatures (both candidate and assessor), dates and marks. There should be a statement to indicate the level of guidance provided.

Centres must ensure that the marks entered online are the same as those recorded on the CRS.

Domain Assessors should internally verify the work being presented for moderation and submit appropriate documentation to show this has taken place. Where marks are altered after internal verification, the centre must ensure the correct marks are entered online.

The two multimedia products produced for IT106 must be presented in electronic format (CD) and should have clearly labelled folders for each candidates work. Guidance for electronic submission can be found on the Edexcel Diploma IT webpage by following the 'Moderators' Toolkit' link.

Candidates should be encouraged to present the work by learning outcome with appropriate headings introducing it. It is useful if assessors annotate the work to show where each of the learning outcomes has been met and make a note of the page numbers on the CRS. This is very helpful to the moderation process.

Whilst centres are not expected to provide evidence for mark grid B it is suggested that some form of witness statement (personalised for each candidate) is presented so the moderator can see what was done to be awarded the marks.

Centres should include the assignment for each unit to allow the moderator to see what the candidates have been asked to do.

There was only a small amount work submitted this series therefore there is limited feedback to provide on candidate performance.

Unit 2 – The Impact of Technology

LO1. Technology in Organisations

Candidates are required to provide a description of the technology used in two organisations, including reasons for its use. In addition to this, for marks to be awarded in the top mark band, they need to provide notes on how the technology benefits the organisation such as improved efficiency, increased profits, improved communication and the ability to access new markets.

Candidates must look at two organisations and describe the technologies used. Candidates should give brief descriptions of the organisations, but then should concentrate on the technologies the organisations use for such things as administration, control and monitoring, education and training, mobile working, marketing, sales and security. Candidates that use the school environment as the basis of their case study are able to relate well to the technology used within them.

LO2. Impact of technology on individuals and society

Candidates are required to provide examples of how individuals use technology to live, work, learn and socialise with comments on how it affects them. They should also give an example of the impact of technology on society.

There is the opportunity here for candidates to make the most of their own experiences of their uses of technology, which will allow them to provide information on how it affects them. Candidates need to cover the impact of technology on society with reference to the digital divide, virtual communities and social networking.

Unit 3 – Working With People

LO1. Communication media

Candidates are required to produce comments about the three types of communication media in business contexts and their use. The types of communication that should be covered are digital, print and spoken. Candidates should not cut and paste information from websites but should use their own comments on the uses of different media types such as informing customers, getting the message across, attracting attention, entertainment, education and persuasion. Different ways of presenting the information eg presentations and booklets should be encouraged.

There is also a requirement for candidates to comment on their choice of publication for the team task. It is recommended that candidates include comments on why the decision was made to choose the final publications presented. Candidates are producing the list of publications they are going to produce, but few are making comments to say why they are going to use the publications and why others are rejected. Comments should focus on the choice of publication rather than the publication itself.

LO2, 3, 4 – Communicating a Message, Forming a Team & Team Working

Candidates are required to produce a team plan with comments made throughout the project on team discussions and decisions made. The team should produce some business related communications that present both textual and numerical information, and each candidate should make some contribution to the team effort to communicate a message.

Some basic team plans are submitted by candidates as a starting point, but usually the plans are not referred to again during the project. Most plans are included because the candidates have been set a task to produce a plan but once done they are then ignored. Regardless of the complexity of the project there should be a suitable plan – a list of tasks with a start and end date for each and an estimated time for each of the tasks should be included as a minimum requirement.

Candidates need to update the plan as they are working on the tasks to show whether the dates/times were adhered to, or whether there were changes. There could be a column added to allow for comments on team discussions and decisions made. Comments could include a record of meetings to discuss a task – what did each team member say, what was

discussed and what was decided. In some instances it was difficult to see how the team worked together and who was in each team. An example of a team plan can be found on the Edexcel IT Diploma website.

To be awarded marks in mark band 3, candidates need to comment on initial meetings where objectives were agreed and roles allocated. These could be included on the comments section – what did the team agree to do – lists of tasks, why they came to the decision and who was going to do what.

The business communications need to show evidence of both textual and numerical information. Candidates should be encouraged to use numerical information such as charts, spreadsheet data etc.

LO3, 5 – Reflecting on performance

Candidates are required to make comments on the performance of the team including the effect of behaviour or actions on communication. They should also provide comments on their own performance and contribution to teamwork which demonstrates self awareness. Candidates should make comments on their own and their team's performance with reference to the effects of behaviour or self awareness.

Candidates should be encouraged to keep notes throughout the project to remind them of what has happened during the project, and how they performed so this would help them when completing this section of the work.

Unit 4 – Network Systems

LO.1 – Network components

Candidates are required to identify the components and provide a description of their function. Candidates should not download information straight from the internet but should provide their own comments on the various components to show an understanding. Candidates should look at the list provided in the specification and cover all the components to achieve marks in the higher mark bands.

Centres can provide candidates with the list of the components (from the 'What you need to cover' section of the specification). Candidates can be asked to provide a detailed description of each. Images of the various components can also be used.

Candidates should produce a connectivity diagrams to show the layout of a network.

Individual observation records for Mark Grid B should be submitted for moderation.

Unit 5 – Database Systems

LO.1 – Create a simple database system

Candidates are required to create a simple database structure, create a data entry form and enter, edit and delete records. Candidates can provide the evidence in the form of screenshots to cover all the requirements. Centres should encourage candidates to print the initial list of records before any amending has taken place so the moderator can see what candidates started off with. Candidates should not be expected to key in too much data. To be awarded marks in the higher mark bands, entering records etc has to be done accurately. Candidates should produce data entry forms that have been customised and are well presented.

LO.2 – Retrieve and present information

Candidates are required to retrieve some information from the database and present the results clearly. Candidates should perform queries and present the results of these queries in the form of reports that are well presented. The reports should include appropriate titles – these should indicate to the viewer what the report is showing. It is recommended that candidates show the design view of the queries as well as the results so the moderator can see what criteria were used.

Unit 6 - Multimedia

Centres must submit the multimedia products in electronic format on CD as required.

LO1 – Use of multimedia

Candidates are required to make comments about two different uses of multimedia in business such as (1) promotion and advertising, (2) education and training or (3) entertainment and leisure.   The comments should focus on business use rather than general comments.

LO2 – Design, development and testing

Candidates are required to provide up-front designs, develop two multimedia products from the designs that meet the specified requirements. Designs should be detailed enough to allow the product to be developed by someone else if necessary.   Candidates must ensure that designs for both products are completed as an initial task and not after the products have been made. To maximise marks awarded the design should indicate all the features that will be available in the finished product. For example in a presentation the design stage should include all slide transitions and timings.

Candidates must make it clear to the moderato what the multimedia products are promoting.   Candidates should be encouraged to use a range of digital assets such as sound, video, still images, animation and text.

LO3 – Evaluation

Candidates are required to make comments about the products with feedback from reviewers and to provide suggestions for improvement. Reviewer feedback is important so that candidates can use it in their evaluations. Sensible suggestions for improvement should be provided. Candidates should be realistic when reviewing their work rather than being unable to improve it at all.

Candidates are encouraged to make comments on each of their products with 'why' they produced them in the way they did. Why did they decide to have the text appearing one word at a time with sound, why did they choose the images, why did they use music on the video as background etc?

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx