

# CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT MAY 2004

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY LEVEL 3

### General Comments

This test proved to be rather more demanding than was first thought. There was quite a range of performance with some aspects proving quite challenging. The focus of the paper was on database and word processing skills and included the ability to import and position a graphic and produce selected printouts.

### Task A

Almost all of the candidates successfully imported the data and most were able to set the primary key. Several examples of the validation rule were entered but many were incorrect. There was some difficulty in fully displaying the table design owing to the number of fields required. Many candidates overcame this by producing more than one screen dump.

Many candidates are still not able to produce a report with the required number of records although most managed to include details from the merged data. The ability to group and sort is improving although it continues to be an issue for a few.

### Task B

The majority of the candidates attempted this task demonstrating the ability to import the data correctly and to format as required. Some candidates forgot to alter the first six lines of the letter, which cost unnecessary marks. On the whole candidates successfully imported and positioned the graphic although a small number did not resize and maintain the ratio. Surprisingly the cropping of the bow tie had limited success. The majority of candidates experienced great difficulty in centring the information as directed; it is clear that few candidates are familiar with the use of decimal tabs.

The introduction and positioning of merge fields was, on the whole, well done. Some candidates used an address block which was not as directed by the question paper. Some candidates lost marks for inappropriate spacing or for not replacing all words with a merge field. A few failed to printout a copy of the unmerged letter.

The majority of the candidates were able to produce a printout of the selected letters required although some simply printed copies of all the letters.

### Task C

Some candidates lost marks because their files did not clearly demonstrate the use of the appropriate software. Candidates are reminded that if a list of filenames is produced then the extensions need to be included. Centres are reminded that, during an exam, candidates should not have access to other files.

### Recommendations to centres

Ensure that candidates are able to set data types and can generate a fully displayed printout of the table design

Candidates need more practice in setting up a validation

Further practice is needed in selecting the correct records when producing a report

Candidates should be familiar with grouping and sorting

More practice is required in centring particularly in the use of decimal tabs

Care needs to be taken in the importation and manipulation of graphics

Centres need to ensure that students are able to set individual merge fields

Impress upon candidates the need to follow the test instructions carefully and accurately

Centres **must** ensure that candidates have fully covered the criteria set out in the Key Skill test specifications, which can be found on the QCA website.