

## Information Technology Level 3

### General Comments

This test proved quite demanding for some candidates. The paper had a good range of level 3 skills making it 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. The number of entries was comparable with the same test series last year and considerably higher than in March 2005.

### Task A

Almost all of the candidates successfully imported the data and most were able to set the primary key. A few candidates had difficulty in setting the data types for all the necessary fields. The validation rule caused some problems. The majority of candidates attempted this with a few producing an incorrect rule and some who produced a correct rule but as a text string. There was some difficulty in fully displaying the table design owing to the number of fields required. Some 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 use some of the specified criteria. Most had used the correct fields but then lost marks for having the fields in the incorrect order. Inclusivity (failing to include the '=' ) was one of the more frequent issues. Quite a number lost a mark for not having all the data fully displayed. There are still a few candidates who use a columnar presentation format instead of displaying the records in columns as required. 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 most were able to format as required. A surprising number of candidates had difficulty in setting the margins correctly whilst others lost unnecessary marks as they were not able to set the tabs correctly. On the whole candidates successfully imported and positioned the graphic although a small number did not resize and maintain the ratio.

The introduction and positioning of merge fields caused a number of problems., 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 the appropriate 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.

Most had little difficulty in setting up a new folder and many showed the relevant file saved in the folder. A surprising number of candidates, however, did not save the file as text.

## **Task C**

Some candidates lost marks because their files did not clearly demonstrate the use of the appropriate software (no extension or icon). 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

Generate a fully displayed printout of the table design

Candidates need more practice in setting up a validation

Practice is needed in setting the correct criteria when producing a report

Candidates should be familiar with grouping and sorting

Care needs to be taken in the setting of margins

Centres must 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.

Mariette Wyatt  
Chief Examiner  
Information Communication Technology Key Skill