

## **June Test Series – 2005**

### **Chief Examiner's Report**

#### **Information Communication Technology**

##### **Level 3**

#### **General Comments**

The paper had a high percentage of level 3 skills across the all the tasks making this a challenging paper; however the tasks were still all well in line with level 3 requirements. The focus of the paper was on database and spreadsheet skills. Entries for the test were a little lower than in the same series last year and lower than for the May test series. The percentage pass rate was comparable to similar tests.

#### **Task A**

Most candidates produced a printout of the table structure although in several instances there was no evidence of the data itself actually being imported. Those candidates who imported the data successfully usually had the correct field names although some had not set them and still had Field 1, Field 2 etc. Candidates were able to set the data types. The correct validation rule caused problems for many; some used 'AND' instead of 'OR' and many produced the correct rule but as a text string. The validation text, however, was approached with a much greater degree of confidence. Very few had difficulty in displaying all the data when printing the table design.

On balance quite a number of candidates were able to produce a report with the correct records. Others had produced records as a result of an incomplete or incorrect query and this meant that some marks were lost. Other issues in the task focused on the inability to display the information fully whilst others found the addition of a correct title or the report footer to be a problem. The ability to group and sort was done well by most although ascending and descending order continues to be an issue for a few.

#### **Task B**

Candidates found this task quite difficult as the main formula required them to use a LOOKUP table. Of those who attempted this task most were able to import the data correctly. The production of the formulas proved quite demanding and produced some quite varied outcomes. The formula for question 4 was relatively straightforward although some missed the '='. In the same question a number of candidates successfully hid the required columns.

For question 5 some candidates were totally familiar with the use of a LOOKUP or were familiar with the VLOOKUP which could also be applied in this instance. A few produced alternative formulas, for example using a quite complex nested IF statement. Others generated an individual formula for each item but this meant that they did not employ the full range required by the LOOKUP table. Some candidates understood the principle but did not use an absolute cell reference which invariably impacted on their ability to replicate the formulas. Quite a number of candidates did not attempt question 5.

A significant proportion of candidates did not print the required cell range and many did not include row and column headers.

### **Task C**

Some candidates continue to lose marks because their files do not clearly demonstrate the use of the appropriate software or because files are presented as text files. Candidates are reminded that if a list of filenames is produced then the appropriate extensions need to be included. The candidates should not have access to other files during an exam.

### **Recommendations to centres**

Ensure that candidates are able to set data types

Practice is needed on validation rules using AND and OR

Practice is needed in using the required criteria when producing a report

Candidates should be familiar with ascending and descending when sorting

Candidates should be able to address all types of formulas required at Level 3 including the use of LOOKUP tables

The ability to hide columns and to print a specified range needs some attention

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.

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