

General Comments

The test paper had a high percentage of level 3 skills, making it quite challenging for a number of candidates. Some centres presented candidates for this series who were ill prepared for the test, however, other centres presented candidates who were well prepared to undertake all the tasks within the paper.

The focus of the paper was on database and spreadsheet skills.

Almost all candidates who attempted this task, successfully imported the data into a database and produced a printout of the table structure. However, the correct validation rule caused problems for many candidates, although the validation message did not seem to present too many problems.

The majority of candidates were able to produce a query report, but a large number lost marks by presenting the incorrect number of records, incorrect title and failing to display the information fully.

Some candidates lost all the marks for the question by failing to add their name to the report produced.

Task B – Spreadsheet

The vast majority of candidates were able to successfully import the data into a spreadsheet. The most difficult part of the task seemed to be the formulae. Candidates lost marks for failing to use absolute cell references and although some candidates successfully completed the lookup formula, a large number did not appear to be too much of a problem. However, some marks were lost for failing to display gridlines, row and column headings.

Task C

The majority of candidates produced a screen print showing file names, although some candidates lost marks for presenting their files as text files or labelling their file incorrectly.

Recommendations to centres

The setting of validation rules needs further practice.

Candidates need to be able to produce a query using specified criteria

Candidates appear to need further guidance on:

- Ensuring data is fully displayed
- Lookup tables on spreadsheets
- Absolute cell referencing
- Customising printouts e.g. hiding columns etc
- Reading instructions carefully e.g. adding name on all printouts

It appears that some candidates are being entered for the test without being prepared for the requirements of level 3.

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Information & Communication Technology Key Skills