

# Guidance for centres using the Key Skills ICT data files 2011/12

## General guidance

- Centres should give their candidates as much practice as possible importing and manipulating these data files in other applications.
- Centres must have downloaded the data files from the Edexcel website <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/skillsforlife/keyskills/it/Pages/default.aspx> to their centre's local network before the test. You must store them as read-only files, and preferably in sub-directories that follow the same names as the scenarios on the website.
- If you haven't been able to use the WinZip file, you should right-click (pc) or ctrl-click (Mac) on the link to the data file, and chose the option 'Save target as', and save in the relevant folders that you've already created under level 3 or level 4 test data/scenario name.
- If you're a Mac user and are having problems with accessing the zip files, you can use Stuffit Expander. This software is free to download.
- Where possible, you should download the full set of data files at the start of the new academic year. The best way of doing this is by using the zipped files. However, make sure that these files are 'extracted' so that they appear within their associated folders/directories.
- The data files must be stored in their original format (ie as .txt or .jpg files) – don't convert these data files into wordprocessing, spreadsheet or database files. Candidates will be given marks for doing this so it would be inappropriate for centres to do it for them.
- Candidates will be asked in the tests to import these data files into relevant applications. For instance, the test will point them towards a particular file, using its scenario as the path, and ask them to import this data file into, say, a spreadsheet application.
- Centres and candidates must not attempt to simply copy and paste the data into the relevant application. This will not achieve the correct result.
- If candidates haven't imported data into applications before, then this is going to be a problem. Data import is an aspect of the level 3 ICT key skill.
- The tests are designed to be used with contemporary software. Some older versions of software (such as Apple Works and Microsoft Works) will require the data files to be slightly modified to be compatible with these applications.

- Microsoft Works doesn't necessarily recognise comma-separated data, which is the format of the data files intended for spreadsheets or databases. If this is the case, you'll have to amend the data files to be tab-separated. This is what was meant when we said that centres have to store the data files on their local network in a form accessible to candidates for their wordprocessing, database and spreadsheet software.
- Candidates should have access to all the files as soon as a centre has downloaded them. Not all the files will be used in each test. Candidates should have some practice importing this data.
- Your centre might not have a network. In such cases, you should give candidates all the data files on a floppy disk or CD-ROM.
- While they're practising, point out to candidates that importing a data file meant for one application into another application will produce strange results. Briefly, a quick look at the data files will reveal that:
  - .txt files with whole sentences in are destined for word processing
  - .txt files with a lot of comma separated data in text, number and (often) date format, with column headers in quote marks at the beginning, are for database work
  - .txt files with a mixture of numbers and text, and, usually, a few consecutive commas, are for spreadsheet files.
- We can't advise you which software package you should be using, only that you must use the software which both does the job, and that you're familiar with.

## **Guidance on importing data into applications - (Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access only)**

### **Word**

- In Word, go to 'File', then 'Open', and navigate to the relevant folder to find the data file. You will have to change the 'Files of Type' to 'Text Files', as it defaults to Word Documents.
- When you've found the correct data file, when you select open, it will open that data file as a Word document.

### **Excel**

- In Excel, go to 'File', then 'Open', and navigate to the relevant folder to find the data file. You will have to change the 'Files of Type' to 'Text Files' as for Microsoft Word, above. In Excel, a Wizard window will take you through importing.
- The data in the files that is intended for spreadsheets has delimiters, so you can pass through the first window because this is the default setting. The delimiters are commas, so in the next window you will have to change delimiters from the default, which is 'tab', to 'commas'. Also, check that "is the Text Qualifier. In the third window, select General.
- Then you can click 'finish' and it will open an Excel book with your imported data.

## Access

- From the File menu, select 'Get External Data – Import'.
- In the Import dialogue box, navigate to the folder where the data files for the required scenario are kept, using the Look in: box, and select 'Text' in the 'Files of Type' box.
- Highlight the required data file and select 'Import'.
- In the Import text wizard, select 'Delimited' then click on Next.
- In the next window of the Import text window, select 'Comma' as the delimiter, " as the Text Qualifier and tick the box First row contains field names. Click on Next'.
- In the next window of the Import text window, select 'In a new table'. Click on 'Next'.
- In the next window of the Import text window, click on 'Next'.
- In the next window of the Import text window, either let 'Access add a primary key' or choose a 'field as primary key', as required in the test paper. Click on 'Next'.
- In the next window of the Import text window, type in the table name specified in the test paper. Click on 'Finish'.
- On the next dialogue box, click on 'OK'.