

Examiners' Report Summer 2007

GNVQ

GNVQ Intermediate ICT (GY206)



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Summer 2007

Publications Code G 019277

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Y201T/01- Presenting Information

General Comments

Candidates do not express themselves adequately, this is something that centres need to address. Technical terms are frequently not used so that, for example, candidates use “pictures” or “images” to mean graphics, photographs and the logo. Credit can only be given when it is absolutely clear what is meant.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

Candidates were frequently vague in their attempts to give presentation techniques with answers such as “box”, “picture” & “bold”. They are unaware of the distinction between headings and titles. Identifying “headers and footers” is ambiguous in that there was a footer but no header used in the presentation of the document. Many incorrectly identified underlining as having been used.

Most candidates were able to gain between 5 and 10 marks for this question with the most common correct answer being that bold headings were used and helped the reader by standing out.

Many candidates were unable to give distinct responses as to how each technique helped the reader with most being a repetition of “stands out”.

Question 2

Completion of the order form was generally attempted by most candidates although a significant number had no idea what the column headings should be, indicating that they had not been exposed to a sufficient variety of documents. Many candidates were careless when using given information so that the postcode included lower case letters.

Most candidates gave answers to (a)(ii) that were applicable to previous years' questions and were not correct this time. Most related to correct payment or correct goods being received but not to being able to complete the form.

Candidates generally had no idea of the purpose of a delivery note. Many thought its purpose was to let the delivery driver know where to go, others related its purpose too closely to the order form. Similarly many candidates related their responses to (b)(ii) to the original order form rather than the delivery note but most were able to explain why the delivery note would be signed. It seems likely that very few candidates had ever been exposed to delivery notes.

Question 3

Most candidates gained one mark for (a) by identifying that the document was for campers. Many were unable to gain the second mark with answers that were too vague, for example “older people” or “teenagers”. Others were misled by the occasional references to children and decided that “parents” were the audience.

Candidates commonly gave presentation techniques such as “bold”, “centred”, “headings” rather than identifying styles. Where marks were gained it seems likely that this was accidental in that they identified techniques that were also styles with bullet points and columns being common correct responses. Where candidates did identify presentation styles most gave reasons for their use rather than describing the style.

It was disappointing to see so many answers to (c) relating to layout or fonts as more candidates in January seemed to understand what was meant by “writing style”. Many candidates appeared to have been taught to associate styles such as “short sentences” with “informal” styles and were thrown by this document which was in a formal style with short sentences. It was common to see pairings of both formal & long sentences and informal & short sentences. Candidates continue to give reasons for the writing style in their answer to (i) and not in (ii) where reasons are asked for.

Question 4

Many candidates totally ignored the word *presentation* in (b), giving answers that related to spelling, grammar and other incorrect content. Others were too prescriptive in their responses, indicating that candidates had not been exposed to a variety of acceptable standards of layout for letters so that they identified as errors acceptable alternatives to the layout that they had been taught. The most common correct responses were about the postcode being in lower case although this was more commonly expressed as “the recipient’s postcode should be in capitals”.

Most candidates were unable to identify the *type* of software that was used, with most naming commercial brands in (c). However, most candidates were able to identify at least one feature. Many repeated features or gave answers that were not specifically suitable for writing letters.

Question 5

Most candidates did not attempt to produce a bar chart in (b)(i) but did include numbers in a table. Where bar charts were included they generally scored 5 or 6 marks. A significant number of candidates were inaccurate in their naming of the cardio machines with “stationary bikes” and “tread mills” being common. Many candidates did not include the textual information in their sections of report. Of those who did, few included suitable subheadings or were able to separate the solutions from the problems.

Part (b)(ii) was generally poorly answered with most candidates showing their lack of knowledge of forms of information, giving answers such as bullet points. Many who produced bar charts wrongly identified them as graphs.

Many candidates did not attempt to answer (iii). Of those who did, a common misconception was that a version was "easier to read". The most common correct response was "easier to understand" with better candidates writing about being able to see differences or make comparisons. A large number of candidates wrote about their presentation of the whole report section rather than just focussing on the machine usage data.

A very small number of candidates had not attempted (b)(i) but had answered (ii) & (iii). As the marking of (ii) & (iii) was dependent upon the answer to (i), these candidates were unable to gain any marks.

Question 6

Many answers to (a) related to apparent school rules and were not specific to the use of ICT in the offices at Allenwood Sports & Leisure Centre. Many other candidates confused health & safety with the security of data. Of those candidates who made correct attempts, there was much repetition of similar advice.

Many candidates made good attempts to (b) and clearly understood issues surrounding copyright. Wrong answers included "trademarks", "the Data Protection Act" or were about issues such as causing offence or being racist.

Answers to (c) and (d) demonstrated that, although candidates knew that a firewall was used to help ensure the safety of data, they have no idea that the firewall would protect the data in the specific scenario in (c) and not in (d). Many responses to (d) related to the use of a password but few candidates were sufficiently specific to gain more than one mark.

Y205T/01 - Information Resources

General Comments

Generally, the candidates attempted all of the questions.

There was evidence that there was enough time for the candidates to complete the paper.

Candidates who achieved the higher scores achieved this by attempting all of the questions and attempting the expansions for several questions.

There was evidence that some centres had not covered the unit specifications as candidates showed lacking in the identification of technical terms and associated meanings.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

1a

Very few candidates picked up more than 10 marks here. Candidates are still referring to mobile phones and post/mail. In the past, when responding to similar questions, candidates have mentioned 'attachments' and 'one to many' as advantages to using email but for some reason candidates who mentioned these in this series were in the minority. Although candidates picked up on 'virus could be sent via email' it was rarely accompanied by an appropriate expansion. Candidates often talked about having the wrong email accounts, or not knowing whether they had received them. Common wrong answers mentioned being misunderstood, accents, 'talking to the wrong person' as disadvantages for the phone. Candidates are still giving answers such as easy, quick etc.

1bi

This item was attempted by most candidates and in most cases at least 1 correct method was given. The use of precise terminology was lacking in some instances and candidates gave descriptive responses such as: "password the user" (instead of username/user ID), "scramble" or "encode" data (instead of encryption) and "block the user" (in place of use a firewall).

1biii

This item received a response from most candidates, however the format of the response differed considerably. Candidates either provided a series (or list) of precise actions to back up the file or gave a number of less precise comments related to the task in sentences that too often seemed to come in no particular order.

In the majority of cases the steps given were not in a logical order, however, a large proportion of responses were successful in identifying key terms/phrases such as

“copy and paste file”; “send to USB drive” or “open a new folder and call it backup”. Difficulties arose when candidates identified key words correctly, however the procedure given would not result in the intended outcome. Most commonly, this was when a candidate correctly identified the ‘copy’ step in the wrong context, specifying opening the file and copying the information within it and then pasting this into a folder. Overall candidates appeared uncertain of how to carry out the backing up procedure correctly. Uses of left and right clicks of the mouse to highlight/open menus and objects or to activate shortcut menus were used interchangeably. In some cases candidates referred to the wrong menu to access a particular command, for example identifying the ‘save as’ command within the tools menu. The understanding that should underpin the use of key commands such as ‘insert’, ‘copy’, ‘move’, and ‘paste’ was not in evidence. In certain responses commands, procedures and terminology were applied indiscriminately and incorrectly.

Question 2

2a

Candidates answered this question fully in most cases. Overall the responses were carefully considered and the features that were specified would generally be appropriate for a promotional website for a commercial holiday company.

2b

Candidates seemed to either score high marks here or none at all. Common answers included hyperlinks to other pages; search options with menu etc were quite popular answers. Many candidates stated things like making subheadings bold, use of simple language, clear instructions, lots of pictures, using clear fonts and colours. There were also plenty of general answers like ‘links easy to navigate’

2c

This question required an expansion to qualify the answer given and this proved difficult for many candidates. Either the stem answer and expansion were mismatched and only 1 mark could be given, or the expansion simply described the initial answer (repeated) and gave no further information. Many responses commented upon the popularity of the internet and that “many people have/use the internet” and also that it is “cheaper to advertise online” rather than using more traditional paper-based methods. Few candidates mentioned the interactive benefits of embedding multimedia within a web site as a promotional tool and the key advantage of being able to check availability when booking online, was not identified in most cases. Two misconceptions were that “everybody has the internet/owns a computer” and that access to the internet and hosting a website are free.

2d

Although this question was answered in most cases, it was apparent that a large number of candidates did not understand what a virus actually was, how it infected a system and what methods could be employed to prevent this. Most responses specified the threat of a virus rather than the use of Trojan Horses/Worms. The fundamental difference between anti-virus and firewall software was misunderstood in many instances.

Question 3

3bi

This question was answered by most candidates and in the majority of responses candidates correctly identified why a notice board located in a reception was problematic for the company.

3bii

Candidates had plenty of choice of answers here but many still mentioned letter and internet. Use of memo was a popular answer with many mentioning the delay in receiving it. Email was another popular answer but again the candidates didn't always pick up on the disadvantages. Candidates who mentioned Fax often picked up on the quality etc. but a common answer for fax was 'not having a fax machine', which is not an accurate answer.

Question 4

4cii

It was disappointing to see that the term information overload is still greatly misunderstood. Candidates failed to identify the methods of reducing information overload.

4d

This question received a response in most cases however the quality of answer varied widely.

Candidates were obviously unaware of the advantages and disadvantage to a customer of booking online. Many responses referred to the Company, meaning the candidates failed to answer the question correctly.

Question 5

Candidates were able to pick up most of the marks available for correctly entering the data into the form.

Most candidates were able to pick up at least 1 mark for the second part of this question, mainly for stating stopping mistakes, although a few did pick up marks for the company reputations.

Popularity of Particular Questions

The most popular questions were those requiring single word or short answers, such as questions: 1bi, 2d and 3bi. Questions which required features to be listed as in 2a also received full responses from most candidates.

As mentioned above 2b was either answered very well or badly.

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