



## External Assessment Report 2011

Subject	<b>Computing Studies</b>
Level	<b>Standard Grade</b>

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

# Comments on candidate performance

## General comments

The 2011 set of papers were of a similar standard to previous years, and candidates' responses showed a slight improvement in the quality and length of answers. However, where candidates were asked to justify or explain their answers, many still failed to give sufficient depth.

At Credit level there was a slight improvement in results in Problem Solving but this was levelled out by a slight decrease in Practical Abilities. Results at General and Foundation levels were similar to previous years.

## Areas in which candidates performed well

### Credit

Question 1 (a): an easy starting question, where many candidates achieved the correct answer.

Question 1 (d): much better done than in previous years, with most candidates obtaining 3 out of 4 marks.

Questions 1(e)(i) and (ii), **Data Protection Act**: some candidates are still referring to personal rights and not the rights of the secretary.

Question 1 (f): nearly all candidates correctly stated that a computed field contains a formula.

Question 1 (g): well answered by the majority, stating three of the four steps involved in producing a **standard letter**.

Question 2 (d)(ii): most candidates achieved 2 out of 3 marks, by **showing their working**.

Question 2 (d)(iii): nearly all candidates stated the meaning of **scaling** and **cropping** a graphic correctly.

Question 3 (a)(i): well answered by all, stating that **replication** means **copy**.

Question 3 (b): many candidates did this question well, filling in the spaces correctly in the **IF** statement.

Question 4 (c)(i): **multi-user database** was the answer required and many candidates stated this correctly.

Question 5 (b)(iii): most candidates correctly stated that **wireless** would not be the most suitable data transmission method here.

Question 5 (c): good advantages were stated by many candidates for the use of expert systems.

Question 6 (f): at least half of the candidates stated a correct input or output device used in **virtual reality** and gave an example of its use.

## General

Question 1 (b): many candidates stated two correct graphic tools used to create the diagram, eg **line, circle/ellipse, rectangle/square**, etc.

Question 1 (d)(i): most candidates stated that a **laser printer** would be the most suitable to use.

Question 2 (e): nearly all candidates answered with **hyperlink**.

Question 3 (b): well answered by most candidates stating **SUM** and the correct range.

Question 3 (c): well answered by most candidates stating **MAX** and the correct range.

Question 5 (a)(ii): good answers stating a disadvantage to the workers of having their jobs done by robots.

Question 6 (d): most candidates correctly filled in the gaps for **thin film transistor**.

Question 7 (a): over half of the candidates stated two changes that could be made to improve the appearance of the newsletter.

Question 7 (b): many candidates gave good advantages to using tables for the results.

Question 7 (c)(ii): nearly all candidates stated that **rotation** was needed to correct the picture.

## Foundation

Question 1 (b): identification of the field types was well done by all.

Question 1 (d): the reason for keeping a backup was well explained.

Question 2 (a): identification of elements in a block diagram was well done by most candidates.

Question 2 (d): identification of input, output and backing storage devices was done well.

Questions 3 (a)(i), (ii) and (iii): correctly identifying fields within a database was done well.

Question 4 (c): identification of tools used by robots in differing situations was well done.

Question 6 (c): correctly stating the correct order or carrying out changes to the invitation was well done by all.

## Areas which candidates found demanding

### Credit

Question 1 (b)(ii): most candidates did not explain their answer to part (i) very clearly.

Question 2 (b): many candidates wrongly stated that **linear linkage** was the same as **direct** or **static linkage**, rather than 'the slides are viewed in order (one after the other)'.

Question 2 (d)(i) was poorly answered by many candidates.

Question 4 (f)(i): fewer than half of the candidates answered this by stating that it was free forever or can be used as many times as they like, instead of 'can be distributed/used on as many different computers as you wish OR used without time limit'.

### General

Question 1 (a): not many candidates were able to state reasons why a database or a spreadsheet should be used to keep records. Answers could have included: **easy searching, easy to sort into order, charts and calculations.**

Question 1 (f)(i): few candidates correctly stated that a **broadband** connection should have been used to upload the file.

Question 3 (d): many candidates received one mark for this question by correctly stating that it had to be changed to **currency**, but failed to mention that they needed to **highlight the correct cells first.**

Question 4 (a): most candidates answered this as **real-time** processing rather than **interactive** processing which was the correct answer.

Question 4 (c): fewer than half the candidates correctly stated that **encryption** was changing the text into a form of **code.**

Question 4 (d): poorly answered by most candidates.

Question 4 (f): badly answered by many candidates. Answers could have included: **can use anywhere (in range), can add computers to network with ease, no trailing cables.**

Question 5 (a)(i): most candidates did not read the stem of the question and therefore gave an answer similar to part (ii).

Question 6 (e): identification of job types was poorly done by many candidates.

### Foundation

Question 1 (f)(i): stating the feature used in a spreadsheet to produce the chart was poorly answered.

Question 2 (c): stating two differences between ROM and RAM was not well done by most candidates.

Question 4 (e): two reasons for using a bar code to enter data was poorly answered by many candidates.

Question 4 (f): two reasons for using a mainframe computer was not well done by most candidates.

Question 4 (g): stating which items make up a terminal, **keyboard and monitor**, was not well answered.

Question 5 (a)(ii): stating two reasons why companies should use a LAN: **sharing peripherals, sharing files, sharing software** was poorly answered by nearly all candidates.

Question 5 (b): stating one hardware item: **modem**, and one software item: **browser**, was again poorly done by the majority of candidates.

Question 6 (d): not many candidates stated that a **folder** would be the place to save their work.

Question 6 (f): most candidates wrote **PowerPoint** as their answer to this part instead of **presentation** packages.

## **Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates**

### **Credit**

Emphasise to candidates that Credit answers should be answered fully. Single-word answers to explain or describe-type questions will not gain full marks.

Candidates should not use brand names when describing solutions. Word processing software is a way of preparing text documents; answers like 'MS Word' or 'AppleWorks' are not accepted.

Candidates are still using the term 'memory' when they should be using 'storage capacity'.

### **General**

Again, several candidates gave answers like 'faster', 'cheaper', 'more efficient', without detailing what is faster, or why it is more efficient, etc.

Candidates should attempt all questions, even if the layout is slightly unfamiliar.

### **Foundation**

Candidates should be advised to attempt all questions, as many still leave gaps when a tick or a guess could get a mark. As in the Credit section, too many candidates are using brand-named products, eg PowerPoint, Excel, instead of the correct terms: word processing, presentation, spreadsheet, etc.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2010	12,390
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Number of resulted entries in 2011	11,659
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## Statistical information: performance of candidates

### Distribution of overall awards

Grade 1	19.8%
Grade 2	23.9%
Grade 3	23.9%
Grade 4	18.3%
Grade 5	10.6%
Grade 6	2.4%
Grade 7	0.2%
No award	1.0%

### Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report

Assessable Element	Credit Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		General Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		Foundation Max Mark	Grade Boundaries	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
KU	36	24	17	36	21	17	36	21	17
PS	36	27	20	36	24	18	36	24	16