Course Report 2014

Subject	Administration and IT
Level	National 5

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Component 1: Assignment

Centres and markers indicated that the assignment was of a correct standard and covered a wide variety of the course, which tested the ability range of a National 5 candidate. Many mentioned that National 5 candidates should have been able to complete the assignment in the four-hour time allocation. Most questions in the assignment were well attempted by the majority of candidates.

The assignment produced a wide range of marks; there were a number of candidates attaining few marks, indicating that they may have been presented at an incorrect level. Candidates attaining high marks tended to lose their marks through not reading specific instructions and lack of proofreading.

The grade boundary for an upper A was reduced to 83% as candidates did not attain the top 5% of marks. This is due to the nature of the assignment requiring attention to detail and accuracy over a prolonged time and number of tasks.

Section 2: Comments on Candidate Performance

Component 1: Assignment

Candidates tended to attain relatively highly in the desktop publishing tasks; most candidates used desktop publishing software when appropriate. Many candidates showed good use of word-processing functions.

Candidates should take more care when reading instructions — many candidates are not being awarded marks due to not following print, sort, and search instructions. Candidates must ensure that they proofread work carefully. Keyboarding, and consistency of capitalisation and spacing was poor across many centres. Theory questions were very poorly attempted; most candidates did not expand answers sufficiently to attain highly.

A number of candidates did not submit printouts for all tasks. This did not appear to be due to time constraints — it appeared to be poor organisation.

Section 3: Areas in which Candidates performed well

Component 1: Assignment

Task 1: Most candidates attained highly in this question. Almost all were able to insert a title slide with the correct information. Most candidates inserted action buttons and slide numbers and were able to print out in hand-out format.

Task 2: A varied response was accepted for this question. Many candidates produced creative business cards. Appropriate headed paper was usually produced. Candidates were usually aware of the essential information to be included in each of these.

Task 3: Directions from the SECC were usually correctly printed, and candidates were able to search for the relevant information from the internet.

Task 5: Most candidates inserted a new field in the database and populated it accurately.

Task 7: Almost all candidates were able to print out the relevant record, and most were able to search for the correct criteria.

Task 8: Most candidates were able to select the correct week and times for the e-diary.

Task 9: Almost all candidates were able to enhance the heading and number the information.

Task 10: Most candidates were able to merge cells. Many candidates linked the cells in the two spreadsheets instead of keying in each item, thus reducing the risk of keyboarding errors — this is good practice. The unit cost was usually keyed in correctly. Straightforward formulae, eg multiplication and replication, were used appropriately.

Task 11(a): The majority of candidates were able to search for the correct criteria.

Task 11(b): Most candidates inserted the reference and date in the correct place, and were able to input some fields into the letter using the mail merge function.

Task 12: Most candidates applied manuscript correction signs correctly.

Section 4: Areas which Candidates found demanding

Component 1: Assignment

Task 1: Many candidates were not awarded the background mark as it could not be seen in their printout.

Task 2: In the business card, few candidates mentioned details of the shop and catering service.

Task 3: Many candidates did not lay out the e-mail correctly.

Task 4: Candidates struggled to describe how the organisation benefits from good customer care and to outline ways of providing good customer care.

Task 5: Many candidates were unable to sort on two fields and many did not include title, first name and surname when instructed to include the name.

Task 6: A considerable number of candidates were unable to name Health and Safety legislation. Fewer still could describe the features of the legislation as it related to the employer/organisation.

Task 7: Many candidates were unable to print out all the fields from the selected records, and some struggled to sort the query on two fields. The report heading was often also omitted, or irrelevant.

Task 8: Information in the e-diary was often truncated; therefore the keyboarding mark could not be awarded.

Task 9: Many candidates did not include the year when keying in the date, and many inconsistently capitalised the information which was to be keyed in.

Task 10: Very few candidates inserted the company name where required, most inserted the contact name. Though many candidates realised '2 Vegetarian' was to be keyed in, many were inaccurate, or incorrectly capitalised. Some candidates struggled with more complex formula; IF statements did not always have two conditions, and cells that they were instructed to name were not named. A good number of candidates did not use the sum function to add cells — instead they added each individual cell. They were not given the mark for this. Some formula printouts were truncated, again reducing marks for candidates. Printing instructions were often not followed.

Task 11(a): Many candidates did not include the correct fields in the query — title, first name and surname should be included when name is required.

Task 11(b): Many candidates did not use the query created in task 11(a) as instructed, and some did not know the layout of a letter. Most candidates were not awarded the print mark due to the font change in the letter when it was merged.

A number of candidates inserted the reference incorrectly, and few attempted to insert a subject heading. When they did it was often irrelevant.

Task 12: Very few candidates were able to space the asterisk correctly. Many candidates substituted the asterisk with another yes/no option – they were not awarded marks for this. Keyboarding for this task was very poor. Few candidates demonstrated the shading function which was required. A number of candidates produced forms that would be difficult to complete by hand and many candidates did not use the whole page for the form.

Section 5: Advice to centres for preparation of future Candidates

Component 1: Assignment

Centres are reminded that the assignment should be attempted in task order in four hours. Printouts should be submitted in task order as individual sheets, ie not stapled or paper clipped.

When an instruction is given to use a logo or create headed paper, this should be used consistently throughout the assignment. Telephone numbers should not have spaces within them. Where action buttons are used, they must be inserted — candidates should not use arrows.

E-mails should have a suitable subject heading, an introduction, give information, have a suitable close and sign off with the candidate's name. If information is added as an attachment rather than inserted into an e-mail, there must be a printout of the attachment so that the information can be marked. When printing evidence of an e-mail, it is essential that it is printed from the candidate's sent box and that there is an indication of when it was sent and who to.

If there is truncation in the e-diary, candidates should be taught to print each meeting separately, so that the information can be checked. Where candidates are required to input dates the year must also be inserted.

Candidates should expand their theory answers and take note of the command word used in the question. At National 5 answers should relate to employer/organisation responsibilities. When legislation is assessed candidates must ensure that answers are relevant to an office environment.

All relevant information must be visible when printed, especially when using a black and white printer. This includes being able to see backgrounds, and printed text being legible. Text should be presented in a legible font using a reasonable font size — so that it can be assessed by the marker.

Whilst the candidate's name, school and task number must be keyed-in on all printouts, it is not acceptable for this to be added to headings. Good practice would be to show this information in the page footer.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	0

Number of resulted entries in 2014	4267

Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 100				
A	26.2%	26.2%	1118	70
B	28.1%	54.3%	1197	60
C	24.1%	78.3%	1028	50
D	7.9%	86.2%	337	45
No award	13.8%	-	587	-