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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Key messages

To achieve high marks in the discuss-type and longer questions candidates must give more than a statement in their answer by expanding on the points made. Justification and discussion of the points is also essential.

The use of brand names rather than the generic names are still being given by candidates. It is clearly stated on the front page of the examination paper 'No marks will be awarded for using brand names of software packages or hardware.'

There has been an improvement in the answers given to the actual questions set, rather than candidates answering the question that the candidate thinks are being set.

General comments

Some candidates gave extra answers that were not asked for and therefore could not be marked. Candidates are reminded that if they continue their answer beyond the given answer space, or use additional space to write a replacement answer, they should clearly indicate in the original answer space where to find the additional writing or replacement answer.

Some candidates did not attempt all questions, candidates are reminded to attempt all questions, as an attempt may match some of the mark points, whereas no answer is going to gain zero marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The vast majority of candidates managed to achieve correct answers for statements two and three. Many candidates mixed up MICR and magnetic stripe as well as chip reader and RFID reader.

Question 2

Most candidates achieved at least two marks for this question.

Question 3

This question was answered well by most candidates but a few did not understand what a linker was.

Question 4

The majority of candidates achieved at least three marks on this question.

Question 5

(a)   The vast majority of candidates gained at least half marks on this section of the question. However there was some confusion between input devices and output devices. There were a number of candidates who gave very general answers like computer, gloves etc.

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(b) **Part (b)** was answered better than **part (a)**. But there was still confusion between the input devices asked for in **part (a)** and output devices asked for in this part.

(c) The majority of candidates achieved full marks on this question.

Question 6

Some candidates appeared to get mixed up with GUI and CLI when writing about the benefits and drawbacks and the majority of answers that gained marks were based around errors and ease of use. Some candidates misread the question and thought it related to candidates setting up the new server.

Question 7

(a) This topic had been set previously, some candidates still have the incorrect idea that the watch sends a signal to the satellite and that the satellite sends a signal specifically to the watch rather than sending the signal to the Earth and the software interpreting the data.

(b) **Part (b)** was answered better than **part (a)**. The marks awarded were mainly based around the GPS being able to pinpoint the current location.

Question 8

(a) This question was well answered by many candidates. Some candidates did not produce answers that had enough depth in them for example 'cut' rather than 'crop' and 'zoom' in rather than 'resize'.

(b) This question was well answered by most candidates. Some candidates suggested using the cloud when the question related to the use of email.

(c) Many candidates gave statements rather than expanding upon the point or comparing it to the other device. Many candidates understood the difference and the similarities between the two devices but did not undertake comparisons. The majority of the marks gained related to the portability of the devices, and the fact that it was more difficult to use a laptop computer as there were no flat surfaces in the jungle.

Question 9

(a) Most candidates scored at least one mark for this question. However there were a number of candidates that mixed up CSV and CSS.

(b) Many candidates gained one mark for this part of the question mostly for stating that the file was an image file.

(c) Many candidates gave answers that it was a file that contained many files but did not expand on this stating that the files were compressed,

Question 10

(a) Questions relating to 'Describe the steps…' had been set many times before, but some candidates did not answer this part well. This part of the question produced answers that were simply describing the differences between the two sets of text rather than describing how the second example could be produced from the first.

(b) Candidates answered this part to an equal standard as **part (a)**.

(c) This part of the question was well answered.

Question 11

(a) This part of the question was well answered with most candidates gaining at least two marks, mostly for the examples given rather than the explanation.

(b) Some candidates wrote about the use of passwords and how strong they would have to be rather than answers relating to 'not talking to strangers' and making the profile private.

Question 12

(a)   The question asked what the internet was rather than what the internet did; many candidates mixed up these two important points. Many candidates, however, gained at least one mark.

(b)   This question asked what was meant by the intranet. More candidates knew more about an intranet than the internet. Many candidates stated it was private and used in businesses.

(c)   Many candidates did not expand on their initial points. Such as, the searching is faster, rather than expanding on this point and relating it to search engines. Many correct answers related to 24/7 and the vast range of resources.

Question 13

(a)   Many candidates had some knowledge of these systems but the answers did not give enough depth. When a car enters the car park a photograph is taken; many candidates understood this but then thought that the number plate was stored rather than each character being read by an OCR and then stored. Many marks were gained for searching in the database.

(b)   This part was not so well answered, expected answers should relate to damage to the number plate or people/objects obscuring it etc.

Question 14

This question was the level of response question. As with many of the other questions on the paper candidates gave statements but did not expand upon them. Online booking systems had been set previously. As with many other questions candidates tended to focus on the negatives of using online systems i.e. identity theft and online fraud rather than the context of the question. The question asked for the advantages and disadvantages of using online booking systems; security is one small part of this. Comparisons with online and manual systems were expected, i.e. they can be booked from anywhere and 24/7.

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Paper 0417/12
Written Paper

Key messages

To achieve high marks in the discuss-type and longer questions candidates must give more than a statement in their answer by expanding on the points made. Justification and discussion of the points is also essential.

The use of brand names rather than the generic names are still being given by candidates. It is clearly stated on the front page of the examination paper 'No marks will be awarded for using brand names of software packages or hardware.'

There has been an increase this year candidates splitting the answer space into columns of advantages and disadvantages side by side. This approach does not lend itself well to discussion answers.

General comments

Some candidates gave extra answers that were not asked for and therefore could not be marked. Candidates are reminded that if they continue their answer beyond the given answer space, or use additional space to write a replacement answer, they should clearly indicate in the original answer space where to find the additional writing or replacement answer.

Some candidates did not attempt all questions, candidates are reminded to attempt all questions, as an attempt may match some of the mark points, whereas no answer is going to gain zero marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a)   Generally well answered by most of the candidates, who showed good knowledge of the term hardware. Most candidates gave examples in their definitions.

(b)   As with the first part of this question most candidates were able to gain the mark mostly by stating one of the key words rather than explain what software was.

(c)   Most candidates were able to gain the mark for this part of the question. Some candidates gave two answers rather than the one asked for.

(d)   Many of the candidates were able to gain the mark for this part of the question. Some candidates stated that it was a screen rather than a touchscreen.

Question 2

Generally, this question was well answered with most candidates gaining at least three marks, although some candidates thought that HDD store the start-up instructions. The answers given for statements 1 and 4 were often the wrong way around.

Question 3

Some candidates gave answers of 'keyboard' and 'mouse' rather than 'MICR' and 'RFID'. Candidates who gained marks tended to get both of the allocated marks; 'RFID' was more often correctly identified than 'MICR'.

Question 4

Most candidates produced good answers to this question.

(a) Nearly all candidates were able to answer this part of the question correctly.

(b) This part of the question was very poorly answered with most candidates incorrectly writing motion sensor.

(c) Many candidates were able to answer this part of the question correctly although some thought the answer was turbidity or pH sensor.

(d) Most candidates were able to gain at least one mark for this part of the question with many gaining at least two marks. The most popular mark was for the use of the IF() command, with the second mark for the D36 < D32. Those candidates that managed to gain these two marks tended to gain the third mark for the correct use of Y and N. Some candidates missed out the speech marks and therefore did not gain the mark. Some candidates also wrote the Y and N the wrong way round, thus not gaining the mark.

(e) Most candidates managed to gain at least one mark on this question. The majority of candidates managed to identify column E as the column to select and then went on to write about inserting a new column. However, few candidates actually stated that cell F2 needed to be selected; they simply wrote that they would type the title in cell F2. The question asked for candidates to explain the steps that would need to be taken to add the new column. Some candidates explained the formatting aspect at the end of their answers, but some simply stated that the title needed to be made bold.

(f) Most candidates answered this question correctly.

(g) This part was not well answered, many candidates did not write down the correct range with some not identifying it at all.

Some candidates wrote click sort but then did not expand on their answers.

(h) Most candidates were able to gain one mark for this question. Most candidates correctly identified the correct cell reference but many placed the G3 at the end of the formula and some did not write the cell reference with the correct $ signs. Some candidates failed to write the cell reference replacing it with the value.

Question 5

(a) Some candidates thought that the smartwatch needed the internet or even WiFi to operate rather than signals from satellites. Many candidates wrote about the problems of texting while running. There were some good answers which included explanations of why a small screen was a problem and battery life of the smart watch.

(b) Many answers lacked depth therefore answers like 'car navigation' and 'locating a place' were not uncommon.

(c) Many candidates were able to gain at least one mark for this question. A lot of answers referred to text messages being cheaper, and to a text message being quicker (without expanding on the latter point). Some candidates mentioned issues like background noise and her friend not being able to hear the conversation. Answers like the text message has a smaller footprint were rarely seen.

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Question 6

This question was quite well answered with most candidates managing good marks.

(a) This part was not as well answered as the other parts. Many candidates lacked expansion and depth is their answers. The question that was asked related to the disadvantages to the candidates but the answers given just listed the general disadvantages of using the internet rather than an intranet.

Some candidates gave answers that related to the speed of the internet with others mentioning viruses and the common answer hacking. Distraction was a good answer given but as with many questions a lack of expansion.

(b) (i) Most candidates gained marks on this part of the question. The most common answers given related to the use of spam filters and not responding to spam emails. Some candidates did not read the question carefully and just described spam email rather than the ways of preventing it or related their answers to the internet rather than emails.

(ii) As with the previous part many candidates gained marks on this part. As with the previous part of the question some candidates answered it relating to the internet rather than emails. The use of antivirus software was a popular correct answer.

Question 7

(a) (i) Some candidates did not provide suitable answers relating to part-time and job sharing. Some candidates referenced fewer hours or days; however there were many vague answers with some candidates thinking that part-time working involved two jobs carried out by the same person.

(ii) Few candidates mentioned that the job being shared was a full-time job.

(b) Many candidates tried to use answers they had seen on previous papers such as works '24/7' without relating it back to the scenario. The question related to the payroll department and the answers should relate to how you would solve the problems for this department. For example improved accuracy in calculating wages, or sending out wages using an online system. Some candidates thought that robots would improve the working in the department again without reading the scenario. Some candidates wrote about the new jobs that could be created to look after the computers.

Question 8

Most candidates were able to gain good marks on this question but expansions to the points made were few and far between.

Advantages achieved a lot more marks than the disadvantages. Most of the advantage marks related to saving time in travelling to the bank and saving transport money in travelling to the bank. For the disadvantages there were references to the older person having difficulties, but the answer tended not to be expanded upon therefore not gaining the mark. The security of the system or lack of it was a popular answer. A few candidates wrote primarily or solely about online shopping, which was not the scenario of the question.

Question 9

(a) Diagnostics and Chess were the most popular answers, with several candidates gaining at least one mark for this question. The responses were split by those who knew what an expert system is used for and those that just gave general systems used in commerce and industry e.g. word processors or robots. Some candidates did not give specific uses e.g. 'in a doctors' which were too vague.

(b) This was generally well answered with most candidates gaining at least two marks for 'interactive user interface' and 'rules base' for example. However, some candidates wrongly identified the 'search engine' option as being correct.

Question 10

This question was well answered with most candidates gaining at least three marks. Some candidates however had 'identifying the problems' being associated with the Evaluation stage.

Question 11

This question was well answered by most of the candidates. Candidates gave a range of factors and as a result gained many marks.

Question 12

Most candidates were able to gain some good marks on this question.

(a) This was well answered with most candidates gaining at least two marks. Some candidates thought that .xls and .doc were examples of generic file formats due to their popularity. However .pdf and .csv was fairly well recognised as examples of a generic file formats.

(b) This part of the question was not as well answered as **part (a)**. Candidates had an awareness of the difference but were not able to explain it well. There were lots of reference to being able to open in 'ALL' software or 'ALL' packages when in reality generic file formats may only open in some types of software.

Question 13

(a) (i) Most candidates were able to gain one mark for this question part.

   (ii) This part of the question was not as well answered as **part (a)**. Most marks were awarded for specifying the url etc. As with some of the other answers in the paper many candidates did not go into enough detail regarding attribute/hyperlinks.

(b) Some candidates wrote about how an absolute reference would always take you to a website, a relative one sometimes did this. This question, tested, amongst other things the candidates' ability to expand upon an answer. Some candidates showed an awareness of this type of addressing but did not expand on their initial answers. Some candidates gained good marks.

Question 14

This question was well answered with most candidates gaining at least one mark, with a lot gaining both marks. There were, however, some repeated answers like digital data is read by a computer and analogue data is not read by a computer. Many candidates gave more than two correct responses to the question.

Question 15

This question was the level of response question. As with many of the other questions on the paper candidates gave statements but did not expand upon them. The topic of e-safety has been set previously.

E-safety relates to the protection of personal data and the user, not the computer system. A lot of candidates discussed at length antivirus, firewalls and spam which would protect the computer system not personal data. Most correct responses related to protection of personal data, protection of sensitive data, examples of issues of access to personal data, protection of vulnerable people, predators and stalkers. Some candidates wrote incorrectly about health and safety issues. Many candidates wrote about the measures you can take to provide e-safety rather than discussing the need for e-safety. A number of candidates gave long answers without actually addressing the question.

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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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The use of brand names rather than the generic names are still being given by candidates. It is clearly stated on the front page of the examination paper 'No marks will be awarded for using brand names of software packages or hardware.'

There has been an improvement in the answers given to the actual questions set, rather than candidates answering the question that the candidate thinks are being set.

In order to gain high marks in questions the answer needs to relate back to the question. Some candidates are answering questions with answers like quicker but without further expansion.

General comments

Some candidates gave extra answers that were not asked for and therefore could not be marked. Candidates are reminded that if they continue their answer beyond the given answer space, or use additional space to write a replacement answer, they should clearly indicate in the original answer space where to find the additional writing or replacement answer.

Some candidates did not attempt all questions, candidates are reminded to attempt all questions, as an attempt may match some of the mark points, whereas no answer is going to gain zero marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A large number of candidates managed to gain at least three marks on this question.

Question 2

Many candidates manage to gain full marks on this question. Some candidates placed two ticks on one line and therefore did not gain the associated mark.

Question 3

Generally, well answered with lots of candidates gaining one mark by understanding what MICR was. Most of the marks were awarded for still being readable if written over and for more secure. Some candidates gave general answers to this question without expanding upon these.

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Question 4

This was not well answered; the question was a comparison between dot matrix printers and laser printers. As with the previous question some candidates gave general answers without expansion i.e. quicker. Most gained the marks for noise and the dirty environment. Some candidates referred to the cost of the printer being cheaper; however cheaper is relative.

Question 5

Most candidates were able to gain at least two marks on this question.

(a)   On the whole this was well answered with candidates gaining the mark for saying it runs/controls the computer/hardware. Some candidates simply stated that the software was provided with the computer.

(b)   This part was not as well answered as **part (a)**. Many candidates repeated the word application in the answer. As with **part (a)** those candidates that understood the definition gained the mark, but it was more difficult to guess the answer.

(c)   Most candidates managed to gain at least one mark for this part of the question. Those candidates that only gained one mark tended not to identify linker.

Question 6

Many candidates spent much of the answer explaining the terms and then ran out of space to explain how they could be prevented. Some candidates mixed up the three terms or simply answered the same for each one.

(a)   This part of the question is a topic that had been covered in previous papers. Some candidates looked at the root of the question and the word security and then gave answers relating to passwords. Some of the answers to **part (a)** were totally correct for **part (b)**.

(b)   This part was not as well answered as **part (a)** although some candidates did state that anti-spyware should be used. Some candidates confused antivirus with anti-spyware.

(c)   This part of the question was answered better than **parts (a)** and **(b)**.

Question 7

(a)   This part was not well answered. Candidates need to explain the similarities and the differences between the devices. Some candidates answered the question by stating what these devices could be used for, gaining one mark for saying that they were both network devices. Most candidates gained one mark for explaining the way data is sent to other devices on the network with the occasional candidate gaining a further mark for referring to the MAC address.

(b)   Most candidates were able to gain at least one mark and some candidates giving a full description of the 79 frequencies and spread-spectrum hopping or explaining hand shaking. Candidates usually gained marks for switching on the Bluetooth with some gaining a further mark for explaining that a password was required and that the devices were paired.

Question 8

Most candidates gained at least half marks for this question.

(a)   Very few candidates gaining more than two marks for the question. Lookup check was very rarely seen and lots of candidates did not gain further marks for repeating the check further down the column. The question stated that answers should not be repeated.

(b)   This part of the question was generally well answered even though some candidates did not gain the mark if they had not included the underscores or used a capital N. Most common wrong answers were 'Family_name' and 'Contact_telephone_number'.

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(c) Most candidates who attempted this question part were able to gain at least three marks. However, a surprisingly large number of candidates did not attempt the question part. Many candidates were able to produce all the fields and were able to use drop downs and character boxes but few candidates included submit/home buttons or calendars. Some nicely drawn forms were seen.

(d) Most candidates were able to gain at least two marks for this question and could have gained more marks if candidates had used technical terms. For example, rotating the shape was a correct answer but tilting the shape was not. Candidates did not explain the changes in sufficient depth to gain all of the marks.

(e) A few candidates explained how an expert system was set up which was not what the question asked for. Many candidates knew the terminology but were unable to explain how they worked together to produce the diagnoses. Few candidates followed through with the process of comparing the data with the knowledge base using the rules base and the end result being the generation of possible diagnoses.

Question 9

Many candidates understood that the data was sent to the microprocessor and that this data had to be compared with the pre-set value. Few candidates gave answer relating to the comparison of data and the signals sent from the microprocessor to the actuator to raise and lower the barrier.

Some candidates thought that the light sensors were able to make decisions as to when to send data to the microprocessor or to operate the barrier.

Question 10

Many candidates were able to gain at least three marks on this question. Some candidates gave answers relating to health although these were far fewer. Some candidates managed to give the issue but then repeated themselves or lacked detail in the method.

Question 11

(a) Most candidates did not give a comparison with other methods. Most candidates simply gave an advantage or a disadvantage of one device; those candidates who produced a comparison gained good marks. Some candidates mentioned the speed of data entry and the fact that more errors could be produced using a keyboard, but some referred back to cost which is relative.

(b) This part was answered better than **part (a)**. Some candidates wrote about the differences between a fax and email rather than the advantages and disadvantages. There were the generic answers from some candidates i.e. an email is faster and cheaper without expanding on the answer. Some candidates thought an email was less private forgetting that a fax is generally printed in an open area and could easily be read by others.

Question 12

Most candidates were able to gain at least two marks on this question.

(a) This question was well answered with many candidates able to give at least one correct answer with some gaining both marks. There were some wrong answers included proofreading and validation checks.

(b) This part of the question was not as well answered as **part (a)**. Some candidates were able to give accurate descriptions of the processes but did not identify the types of error that could occur.

Question 13

Most candidates were able to gain at least two marks on this question.

(a) Some candidates explained referencing rather than functions. Few candidates were able to explain functions, usually giving an explanation of a formula rather than a function.

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(b) This part of the question was answered better than the other two parts showing that many candidates understand the concept of absolute referencing, but many candidates do not carry on to say 'while the formula was being replicated'. Most candidates gained a mark for the $ sign.

(c) Some candidates did give reasons as to why named ranges are used, but the majority gave generic answers like they were 'easier' or 'quicker'. With answers of this type it is important that they are expanded upon.

Question 14

Many candidates were able to gain at least two marks on this question. However some candidates gave answers that described the full process of purchasing a ticket rather than just the concept of the inputs and outputs. The question related to the use of EFTPOS terminals therefore answers needed to be related to this Some candidates that gave vague answers like 'Screen gives the information' which was too general and did not gain credit.

Many candidates gave good responses to this question; however some candidates incorrectly described using a bank ATM or alternative booking systems. Some candidates wrote about reserving tickets in a cinema and others about tickets for parking, due to not reading the question carefully.

Question 15

This question was the level of response question and related to a comparison with the internet and visiting the library to use historical documents. Having stated that the documents were historical some candidates wrote about the internet having up to date documents, therefore defeating the object. As with previous answers on this paper there were far too many general answers that did not relate to the question or expand upon the points made. Some candidates side lined the question and wrote about the internet failing without expanding upon the answer or wrote about hacking which did not relate to the question.

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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

| Paper 0417/21 |
| Practical Test A |

Key messages

For this examination, the main points to note are as follows:

* Candidates must be able to distinguish between the typeface categories of serif and sans-serif font types.
* Text to be keyed by the candidate is displayed in bold on the question paper – the accuracy of this data is assessed so it must be entered exactly as shown, including punctuation and capitalisation.
* Careful proofing techniques are required to ensure consistency of presentation and to ensure all data is displayed in full.
* Candidates must be able to produce legible screenshots to capture the required evidence.
* Candidates must be able to distinguish between a database page header/footer area and the report header/footer area and understand which is appropriate to use.
* Candidates must be able to insert merge fields into the mail merge master document whilst maintaining the existing spacing and punctuation.
* The master document containing merge fields must be printed to provide evidence that mail merge has been used to complete the task.
* Candidates must enter their identification details on their work before printing.
* Candidates must provide a printout of their Evidence Document as this contains evidence that could substantially improve their grade.
* Screenshots produced to evidence ICT skills need to show the outcome of an action rather than the skill process.

General comments

The paper gave a good spread of marks and most candidates appeared well prepared for the examination. The majority of candidates completed or attempted all elements of the paper and those who submitted work showed a good level of skill. There has been a marked improvement in the creation and application of styles and, as a result, documents are usually well presented. The mail merge task is also well done with many candidates achieving full marks for this section. Candidates continue to find the theory questions challenging and usually do not provide enough detail in their answers.

A number of candidates did not apply the correct typeface category throughout the paper. The font types serif and sans-serif will not appear in an installed font list as they are not font style names but are categories of font type with specific attributes. Candidates must be able to identify the different characteristics of these font types and select an appropriate font for the font type specified. An example of a serif font type would be Times New Roman and a sans-serif font type would be Arial.

When creating paragraph styles in the document candidates should base this on the 'normal' or 'default' paragraph style to ensure that no additional formatting is applied. Extra formatting that has not been specified in the House style specification will lead to candidates not achieving the mark, for example, the font style *Algerian* is a serif font style that displays all capital letters and this additional formatting would mean that a candidate would not achieve the mark unless all capital letters was specifically requested on the House style specification.

Candidates need to take greater care with the accuracy of data entry. There were a number of marks not achieved due to careless data entry errors including typographical errors, incorrect or missing characters,

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omitted words and errors in punctuation and capitalisation. Candidates should check their data entry very carefully to ensure it matches the text on the question paper.

Candidates are required to produce screenshots to evidence the ICT skills that cannot be assessed through the printed product alone. These screenshots must display the outcome of an action and not the process so for example, the saved word processing document must be seen in the file list within the folder– the '*Save as…*' dialogue box is insufficient as the process is incomplete and this does not show the outcome.

Screenshot evidence is often too small and/or faint to be read even using magnification devices. Candidates must ensure that all screenshots can be easily read with the naked eye. Care should be taken when cropping and resizing screenshots to ensure important elements are still shown. Screenshot evidence of the style modification and database formula were often cropped or truncated so the marks could not be awarded.

The question paper prompts candidates to include their name, centre number and candidate number on all tasks prior to printing. Without clear printed evidence of the author of the work marks cannot be awarded. It is not acceptable for candidates to annotate their printouts by hand as there is no real evidence that they are the originators of the work.

A number of candidates did not print all of the required tasks. Candidates should be encouraged to print evidence as it is completed rather than waiting until the end of the examination. The Evidence Document contains supporting evidence that can substantially improve a candidate's mark so it is essential that they print this document before the examination ends, regardless of whether they have finished all the questions.

Candidates should submit all printouts and cross through any draft versions which are not to be marked. If multiple printouts are submitted without draft versions being crossed through, only the first occurrence of each page will be marked.

Some centres are still submitting stapled work which is not permitted. Hole-punching work and securing it with treasury tags or string is permitted but care should be taken not to obscure text with the punch holes. Several candidates did not achieve marks due to punch holes taking out characters in the database report headings resulting in missing letters in data entry which could not then be assessed for accuracy.

Centres should return the Supervisor's Report Folder with the candidates' work. This identifies the software used and can be helpful if issues were experienced during the practical test. The candidates' work must be submitted in the original hard-copy printed Assessment Record Folders that are provided to centres. Printed or photocopied Assessment Record Folders must not be used.

Comments on specific questions

Task 1 – The Evidence Document

An evidence document was created and used by most candidates to store screenshot evidence. Occasionally the screenshots were too small or faint to be read. A small number did not print identification details on the document so marks could not be awarded for these pages. A few did not present the evidence document for marking.

Task 2 – Document

Question 1

Candidates opened the correct file and most saved it correctly with the file name given. Some candidates incorrectly saved in the original rtf format rather than the format of the word processing software being used and a few did not enter the file name in capitals as shown on the exam paper. Screenshot evidence of the save was often inconclusive showing the save in process rather than capturing the outcome of the file saved. A screenshot of the folder contents after saving provides the evidence required. Most candidates retained the page setup settings as instructed.

Question 2

Headers and footers were generally inserted and aligned as instructed. A few candidates omitted their centre number and/or candidate number from the header details or incorrectly split their identification details in the header area so their name was left aligned, the centre number centred and the candidate number right

aligned, omitting the page number altogether. An automated field was not always used for the page numbers with the keyed number 1 appearing on all pages. Occasionally the header items did not align with the page margins on all pages and candidates who used the built-in content control to align the items did not always remove superfluous text or placeholders in the header and/or footer areas. The automated date field did not always display today's date with some candidates using a different date category such as the create date or save date which resulted in the wrong date being displayed.

Question 3

The creation and storage of styles to meet the House style specification was well done by the vast majority of candidates. Common errors included capitalisation or typographical errors in the style names and styles containing additional formatting not listed in the House style specification. Candidates should make sure that each new style is based on the default or 'normal' paragraph style as this avoids the new style inheriting additional formatting. A significant number of candidates continue to enter 'serif' or 'sans-serif' into the font dialogue box as the font name, or include a comment that the font name 'serif' was not available in their list of fonts. A font style with attributes of the serif typeface category must be selected and applied. Screenshot evidence of the TW-subhead style provided details of the settings created for this style and the formatting of all subheadings in the document needed to match these settings. A few candidates continue to apply formatting to the text without providing evidence of creating styles and do not gain the style marks. A small number of candidates demonstrated no understanding of styles and reproduced the House Style specification table by typing this into their document as it appeared on the question paper.

Question 4

The recall document contained the TW-title style that had already been created, stored and applied to the title text and candidates were required to modify this style's settings. There was a mixed response to this task. A number of candidates created a completely new style or applied the formatting to some text and tried to create a new style based on this formatting rather than modifying the existing style. Screenshot evidence needed to show that the original style had been modified. Occasionally the screenshot was too small or had been cropped making the evidence of modification inconclusive. With the modifications made to the TW-title style the title text in the document should have automatically updated to reflect the formatting changes made but this was not always the case. Candidates generally applied the changes listed in the table but most did not remove the underline enhancement set in the original style.

Question 5

The list of styles from the style manager/organiser provided evidence that the styles had been created and saved. It was not necessary to show all the attributes set for every style. Any screenshot that showed a list of these style names was acceptable although the style ribbon toolbar often truncated the style names or did not show all the styles. The subsequent style application marks were only awarded if there was evidence in the style list that the style had been created and saved.

Question 6

The subtitle text was usually entered accurately. Common errors included omission of the word '*edited*', incorrect case and additional spacing before the colon.

Question 7

In most cases the TW-subtitle style had been applied correctly to subtitle text. Application of the TW-subtitle style was only awarded if the formatting met the House style specification and there was evidence that the style had been created and saved in the style list.

Question 8

Most candidates correctly applied the TW-body style to the text in the document. Occasionally there were inconsistencies in body style such as full justification not applied to all paragraphs and inconsistent spacing after body text paragraphs. As part of proofreading candidates should make sure that all styles have been applied correctly and spacing above and below all body text paragraphs is consistent. Application of the TW-body style was only awarded if the formatting was correct and there was evidence that the style had been created and saved in the style list.

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Question 9

Most candidates changed the page layout to two equally spaced columns with the correct spacing between the columns. Some candidates inserted the initial column break below rather than above the subheading and occasionally a page break was inserted instead of a section break. A small number of candidates displayed the entire document in two columns. The most frequent error was not applying the columns to the correct text and ending the section in the correct position so the two paragraphs above and below the section were displayed as one column.

Question 10

This question tested the application of the TW-subhead style to all 6 subheadings in the document and was performed well by most candidates. The mark was awarded if there was evidence that the TW-subhead style had been created and saved with the formatting of all 6 subheadings matching the formatting seen in the screenshot evidence for **Question 3**. Occasionally extra space was inserted after a subheading, in particular after the subheading *'The Gender Gap'*, which resulted in inconsistent spacing which did not match the saved style or the spacing defined for TW-subhead in the House style specification.

Questions 11 to 13

Almost all candidates imported the correct image and positioned this in the correct paragraph. The image was usually aligned correctly with text wrap applied as instructed. Rotating the image by 180 degrees was not always done well with many flipping the image horizontally or vertically rather than rotating it.

Question 14

The application of bullets to the specified text was done well. Any consistent bullet style was accepted. The presentation of the bullets was often not in single line spacing as specified and a 6 point space had not been left after the last item in the list. The bullet indent was often not set accurately with some candidates using the default measurement or indenting the text rather than the bullet 2 centimetres from the left margin.

Question 15

Most candidates were able to locate the table and insert a new column but this was rarely inserted in the correct position as the third column of the table. The data was usually entered accurately although occasionally the percentage signs were omitted. A small number of candidates deleted the original table and entered the two columns of information again, rather than integrating the new column into the existing table.

Question 16

Most candidates provided evidence in **Question 5** that the *TW-table* style had been created and saved but this was often not applied to the table as the content was not centred with italic enhancement and occasionally there was space left after each row. The column widths were often not manipulated to display the text on one line and many printed all the borders and gridlines instead of the outside border only. Very few candidates controlled the space after the table with many leaving more than a 6 point space below the table.

Question 17

The formatting of the first row of the table was generally done well. The cells were merged and the title centred over the four columns with bold and italic enhancement applied.

Question 18

Responses to this question varied from centre to centre. Few candidates were able to format the text to display superscript and those that did often applied it to more text than required. Some candidates applied bold or underlined, or made this text larger.

Question 19

In most cases there was evidence of good proofreading and document presentation skills, particularly where the styles had been created and applied correctly. Spacing between items was generally consistent and the table was rarely split. A few candidates left large gaps between paragraphs for no apparent reason. The

columns were not always aligned at the top of the page and the bulleted list was sometimes split across columns. Occasionally there was a widow or orphan, most commonly where a subheading had been left at the bottom of a column.

Question 20

Performance on the theory question was slightly better than in previous years. Most candidates were able to identify the csv file type as Comma Separated Value(s). Most achieved at least one mark for identifying the characteristics of this file type with the most popular answers being that the file type is software independent (or a generic file type) and it uses a character (comma) to separate each piece of data. The explanation of when this file type would be used was not well answered despite using several csv files in this examination which could have been given as examples of use (importing tables into a database, as a data source in mail merge etc.).

Task 3 – Database

Questions 21 and 22

The importing of the csv files and creation of primary keys and relationships between the tables were well done. The field names and data types were mostly set correctly although the date field was not always imported in the correct DMY format resulting in date import errors and blank records in this field in the report. A few candidates incorrectly included an ID field in their database structure. Monetary amounts were not always formatted to display the same currency symbol or to 2 decimal places. Most candidates had created a relationship between the tables but the screenshot evidence supplied captured the process of creating the relationship rather than the outcome and this was insufficient to confirm a one-to-many relationship had been created. A screenshot of the relationship dialogue box will evidence the relationship type. The relationship diagram will only be credited if it shows the single and one-to-many infinity symbols confirming the relationship type.

Question 23

The creation of a columnar data entry form using specified fields from the books table was well done. Most entered an appropriate form title in a larger font although occasionally the title was truncated as the text box had not been adjusted to accommodate the larger font size. Some marks were not achieved if candidates did not underlining the title or incorrectly retained the default title incorporating '*J219…*'. The field headings were not always aligned or spaced consistently.

Question 24

Most candidates used their data entry form to enter the new record and provided screenshot evidence of this. The new record occasionally contained data entry errors. Candidates did not achieve the mark if they overwrote the first record in the database (*Midnight Palace; The*) instead of entering this data as a new record. A small number of candidates captured the form screenshot with the wrong record displayed.

Question 25

The first report used fields from the books table and was done well by candidates who attempted this question. The report title was usually entered in a larger font size at the top of the report. Occasionally this title contained data entry or capitalisation errors or displayed additional text such as '*Query 1*' in the title area. The '*g*' descender on the title was not always fully visible as the text box had not been adjusted to accommodate the larger font size. The new field heading was usually entered accurately with only a few omitting the underscore, or having data entry or capitalisation errors. Most used the correct calculation although this was not always displayed with the same currency symbol as the *ASP* field. The search was based on three criterion with the most common errors being the wildcard search on '*night*' and searching for those with a volume of greater than 6000. The wildcard search often only found records beginning and/or ending with '*night*' and did not find those where the title contained '*night*'. For the volume search some candidates incorrectly used the = operator to find records that were greater than or equal to 6000. Excluding '*Proton*' from the search was done well. Most included the correct fields in the report although these were often in the wrong order as, without manual intervention, the software placed the two sort fields at the start of the report. This can be avoided by setting the sort order in the report structure rather than during the creation of the report. Occasionally data in one or more fields was truncated and required some manipulation to ensure all data was fully visible. Most fitted the report to a single page wide and presented this in landscape

orientation. Identification details were often entered in the report footer rather than in the page footer so they printed at the end of the report and not at the bottom of every page.

Question 26

Most candidates who completed **Question 25** provided evidence of exporting the report as an rtf file. A few candidates exported this report in the wrong file type and screenshot evidence often showed the save process rather than the outcome of the file saved in the work area.

Question 27

The second report was well done by those who attempted it with many error-free reports produced. The selection of data caused few problems with the main issues being searching with the OR operator. The report layout is where most errors occurred. The correct fields were usually displayed although these were not always in the correct order with the sort field *Rank* being positioned first. Data was occasionally truncated in the *Title* and/or *Author* fields. The sort on a single criterion was well done. The report title was usually entered in a larger font size at the top of the report. The title area occasionally included additional text such as '*Query 1*' or the title contained data entry or capitalisation errors. The title descenders '*p*' and '*g*' were not always fully visible as the text box had not been adjusted to accommodate the larger font size. The calculation to count the number of books was well done but was not always positioned under the *Binding* field. The label was usually entered to the left of this value but often contained capitalisation errors and/or a superfluous colon. Occasionally the report extended to two pages but most fitted it to one portrait page as instructed.

Question 28

This question tested Assessment Objective 3 – Analyse, evaluate, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions. Candidates did not perform well in applying their knowledge and understanding to suggesting improvements to this database. The suggested improvements needed to be appropriate and valid so a Boolean field for the *Binding* field would be appropriate. Where good suggestions were made few could give valid justifications for their choice.

Task 4 – Mail Merge

Question 29

The mail merge task was well done with many candidates producing error-free work. Most candidates evidenced a field to display the date although some incorrectly used *CreateDate* or *SaveDate* fields instead of a today's date field code. The formatting of the date field as dd/MM/yy was rarely correct with different separators and spacing used and several using one-digit for the day. Screenshot evidence did not always show a field had been used or the formatting of the date field. Identification details were often placed in the header instead of the footer.

Question 30

Most candidates correctly replaced the text and chevrons in the master document with the correct fields from the data source file. The most common errors continue to be not removing all the chevrons and changing the spacing, punctuation and alignment of original text as the merge fields are inserted. A few candidates did not print their master document with the field codes and therefore did not provide evidence that mail merge had been used to create the letters.

Question 31

The merge selection was based on two search criterion and was completed well. A few candidates who used an automated selection method used 'or' instead of 'and' in their selection criteria. Some candidates provided evidence of a tick box selection method which did not provide evidence that an automated filter had been used. A few candidates continue to use '*find*' or '*find in field*' to select recipients at the printing stage which did not merge the letters.

Question 32

Almost all candidates merged and printed the letters as specified.

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Task 5 – Presentation

Question 33

Most candidates successfully imported the 6 slides and presented each as a title and bulleted list. The first slide was accepted as a title slide or as a title with bullets. A small number of candidates did not enter their name after the text as instructed and a few introduced errors by retyping the text '*Presented by:'*. Marks were not awarded where incorrect software had been used with the rtf file opened, manipulated and printed in word processing software.

Question 34

Most candidates entered their identification details and slide numbers on the master slide so they displayed consistently on all slides in the presentation. Very few candidates inserted a call out box with text as specified on the master slide. Some used a text box in place of a call out box but most simply entered the text on the slide or omitted this part of the task entirely. Some candidate's master slide items overlapped the data on the slides or appeared in a different position on the second and subsequent slides which meant that they did not achieve the mark. Built-in slide designs can be used but often apply a different layout to slide 1 so candidates must ensure the design chosen meets all the master slide requirements.

Question 35

The majority of candidates changed the layout of slide 6 to a title slide layout, but often this was not centred on the slide or the bullet had not been removed from the subtitle.

Question 36

Printing of the presentation was generally well done with most printing 2 slides to the page. A few printed all slides as full-page slides.

Task 6 – Printing the Evidence Document

Question 37

Some candidates did not submit a printout of the Evidence Document. It is essential that candidates print their Evidence Document towards the end of the examination time, regardless of whether they have finished the paper. Candidates should make sure that their screenshots are large enough for the evidence to be legible and that cropping/resizing has not removed essential evidence.

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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Paper 0417/22 **Practical Test A**

Key messages

For this examination, the main points to note are as follows:

- Candidates must be able to distinguish between the typeface categories of serif and sans-serif font types.
- Text to be keyed by the candidate is displayed in bold on the question paper – the accuracy of this data is assessed so it must be entered exactly as shown, including punctuation and capitalisation.
- Careful proofing techniques are required to ensure consistency of presentation and to ensure all data is displayed in full.
- Candidates must be able to produce legible screenshots to capture the required evidence.
- Candidates must be able to distinguish between a database page header/footer area and the report header/footer area and understand which is appropriate to use.
- Candidates must be able to insert merge fields into the master document whilst maintaining the existing spacing and punctuation.
- The master document containing merge fields must be printed to provide evidence that mail merge has been used to complete the task.
- Candidates must enter their identification details on their work before printing.
- Candidates must provide a printout of their Evidence Document as this contains evidence that could substantially improve their grade.
- Screenshots produced to evidence ICT skills need to show the outcome of an action rather than the skill process.

General comments

The paper gave a good spread of marks and most candidates appeared well prepared for the examination. The majority of candidates completed or attempted all elements of the paper and those who submitted work showed a good level of skill. There has been a marked improvement in the creation and application of styles and, as a result, documents are usually well presented. The mail merge task is also well done with many candidates achieving full marks for this section. Candidates continue to find the theory questions challenging and usually do not provide enough detail in their answers.

A number of candidates did not apply the correct typeface category throughout the paper. The font types serif and sans-serif will not appear in an installed font list as they are not font style names but are categories of font type with specific attributes. Candidates must be able to identify the different characteristics of these font types and select an appropriate font for the font type specified. An example of a serif font type would be Times New Roman and a sans-serif font type would be Arial.

When creating paragraph styles in the document candidates should base this on the 'normal' or 'default' paragraph style to ensure that no additional formatting is applied. Extra formatting that has not been specified in the House style specification will lead to candidates not achieving the mark, for example, the font style *Algerian* is a serif font style that displays all capital letters and this additional formatting would mean that a candidate would not achieve the mark unless all capital letters was specifically requested on the House style specification.

Candidates need to take greater care with the accuracy of data entry. There were a number of marks not achieved due to careless data entry errors including typographical errors, incorrect or missing characters,

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omitted words and errors in punctuation and capitalisation. Candidates should check their data entry very carefully to ensure it matches the text on the question paper.

Candidates are required to produce screenshots to evidence the ICT skills that cannot be assessed through the printed product alone. These screenshots must display the outcome of an action and not the process so for example, the saved word processing document must be seen in the file list within the folder– the '*Save as…*' dialogue box is insufficient as the process is incomplete and this does not show the outcome.

Screenshot evidence is often too small and/or faint to be read even using magnification devices. Candidates must ensure that all screenshots can be easily read with the naked eye. Care should be taken when cropping and resizing screenshots to ensure important elements are still shown. Screenshot evidence of the style modification and database formula were often cropped or truncated so the marks could not be awarded.

The question paper prompts candidates to include their name, centre number and candidate number on all tasks prior to printing. Without clear printed evidence of the author of the work marks cannot be awarded. It is not acceptable for candidates to annotate their printouts by hand as there is no real evidence that they are the originators of the work.

A number of candidates did not print all of the required tasks. Candidates should be encouraged to print evidence as it is completed rather than waiting until the end of the examination. The Evidence Document contains supporting evidence that can substantially improve a candidate's mark so it is essential that they print this document before the examination ends, regardless of whether they have finished all the questions.

Candidates should submit all printouts and cross through any draft versions which are not to be marked. If multiple printouts are submitted without draft versions being crossed through, only the first occurrence of each page will be marked.

Some centres are still submitting stapled work which is not permitted. Hole-punching work and securing it with treasury tags or string is permitted but care should be taken not to obscure text with the punch holes. Several candidates did not acheive marks due to punch holes taking out characters in the database report headings resulting in missing letters in data entry which could not then be assessed for accuracy.

Centres should return the Supervisor's Report Folder with the candidates' work. This identifies the software used and can be helpful if issues were experienced during the practical test. The candidates' work must be submitted in the original hard-copy printed Assessment Record Folders that are provided to centres. Printed or photocopied Assessment Record Folders must not be used.

Comments on specific questions

Task 1 – The Evidence Document

An evidence document was created and used by most candidates to store screenshot evidence. Occasionally the screenshots were too small or faint to be read. A small number did not print identification details on the document so marks could not be awarded for these pages. A few did not present the evidence document for marking.

Task 2 – Document

Question 1

Candidates opened the correct file and most saved it correctly with the file name given. Some candidates incorrectly saved in the original rtf format rather than the format of the word processing software being used and a few did not enter the filename in capitals as shown on the exam paper. Screenshot evidence of the save was often inconclusive showing the save in process rather than capturing the outcome of the file saved. A screenshot of the folder contents after saving provides the evidence required. Most candidates retained the page setup settings as instructed.

Question 2

Headers and footers were generally inserted and aligned as instructed. An automated field was not always used for the page numbers with the keyed number 1 appearing on all pages. Most candidates inserted the date right aligned in the header area although this was often not an automated field and was not displayed in

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the dd-MMM-yy format given. Those that used an automated date field did not always display today's date with some candidates using a different date category such as the create date or save date which resulted in the wrong date being displayed. A few candidates omitted their centre number and/or candidate number from the footer details. Occasionally the header items did not align with the page margins on all pages and candidates who used the built in content control did not always remove superfluous text or placeholders in the header and/or footer areas.

Question 3

The creation and storage of paragraph styles to meet the House style specification is being done well by the vast majority of candidates. Common errors in creating the styles continue to be capitalisation or typographical errors in the style names, serif or sans-serif font styles set incorrectly, additional formatting applied and incorrect spacing applied before and/or after the style. Additional formatting is often caused when a new style is created based on an existing style with the new style inheriting the formatting attributes of that style. As a result the new style has additional formatting that does not match the House style specification. To avoid this each new style should be based on the 'default' or 'normal' paragraph style. Several candidates incorrectly keyed 'serif' or 'sans-serif' into the font dialogue box which, as that font name does not exist, displayed the default font style. Screenshot evidence of the TC-subhead style provided details of the settings created for this style and the formatting of all subheadings in the document needed to match these settings. A few candidates continue to apply formatting to the text without providing evidence of creating and saving styles and do not gain any of the style marks. A small number of candidates demonstrated little understanding of styles and reproduced the House style specification table by typing this into their document as it appeared on the question paper.

Question 4

The recall document contained the TC-title style that had already been created, stored and applied to the title text and candidates were required to modify this style's settings. There was a mixed response to this task. A number of candidates created a completely new style or applied the formatting to some text and tried to create a new style based on this formatting rather than modifying the existing style. Screenshot evidence needed to show that the original style had been modified. Occasionally the screenshot was too small or had been cropped making the evidence of modification inconclusive. With the modifications made to the TC-title style the title text in the document should have automatically updated to reflect the formatting changes made but this was not always the case. Candidates generally applied the changes listed in the table but most did not remove the underline enhancement set in the original style.

Question 5

The list of styles from the style manager/organiser provided evidence that the styles had been created and saved. It was not necessary to show all the attributes set for every style. Any screenshot that showed a list of these style names was acceptable although the style ribbon toolbar often truncated the style names or did not show all the styles. The subsequent style application marks were only awarded if there was evidence in this style list that the style had been created and saved.

Question 6

The subtitle text was usually entered accurately. Occasionally '*by*' was entered as '*By*' and an additional space was inserted before the colon.

Question 7

In most cases the TC-subtitle style had been applied correctly to subtitle text. Application of the TC-subtitle style was only awarded if the formatting met the House style specification and there was evidence that the style had been created and saved in the style list.

Question 8

Most candidates correctly applied the TC-body style to the text in the document. Occasionally there were inconsistencies in the body style such as full justification not applied to all paragraphs or inconsistent spacing after body text paragraphs. As part of proofreading candidates should make sure that all styles have been applied correctly and spacing above and below all body text paragraphs is consistent. Application of the TC-body style was only awarded if the formatting was correct and there was evidence that the style had been created and saved in the style list.

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Question 9

Most candidates changed the page layout to three equally spaced columns with the correct spacing between the columns. A few candidates displayed the entire document in three columns and a few inserted the column break below rather than above the subheading. Occasionally a page break was inserted instead of a section break. A small number of candidates appeared to apply the column formatting in separate sections rather than selecting and applying to all the required text. This lost the order and flow of the paragraphs.

Question 10

Nearly all candidates applied bullets to the specified text. Any consistent bullet style was accepted. The presentation of the bullets was often not as specified with many using the default bullet settings and not manipulating these to align the bullets at the left margin in single line spacing. Several did not leave a 6 point space after the last item in the list.

Question 11

This question tested the application of the TC-subhead style to all 7 subheadings in the document and was performed well by most candidates. The mark was awarded if there was evidence that the TC-subhead style had been created and saved with the formatting of all 7 subheadings matching the formatting seen in the screenshot evidence for **Question 3**. Occasionally extra space was inserted after a subheading, in particular after the subheading *'Our Fleet'.* This resulted in inconsistent spacing which did not match the saved style or the spacing defined for TC-subhead in the House style specification.

Questions 12 to 16

Most candidates created a vertical bar chart and inserted this in the correct position within the column width. The data selection was not always correct with some candidates charting all the data and others including data from the *Total* column in their selection. The chart title was usually entered accurately. The value axis title was occasionally keyed as '*Passsenger'* or was displayed on the wrong axis. Where the correct data had been selected the formatting of the value axis scale to display a minimum and maximum value with set increments was well done. Displaying the values as data labels on top of each bar was not always done and a few candidates incorrectly displayed a legend. A number of horizontal bar charts and a few pie charts were seen.

Questions 17 and 18

Almost all candidates imported the correct image and positioned this in the correct paragraph. The image was usually aligned correctly with text wrap applied as instructed. Occasionally the image extended into the left and/or bottom margin, or was positioned adjacent rather than below the subheading which offset the centring of the subheading. Resizing the image was well done and most maintained the aspect ratio. Some candidates unnecessarily inserted extra space below the subheading to accommodate the imported image and this resulted in inconsistent spacing after this subheading. This printout was marked if the printout containing the database extract was not produced in **Question 28**.

Question 19

This question tested Assessment Objective 3 – analyse, evaluate, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions. Generally responses lacked detail and did not evaluate the suitability of a wiki to publish this type of information. Some candidates described a wiki in general terms with a number confusing a wiki with a blog. Several attempted to evaluate the content of the word processed document and suggested improvements to this such as colour and more images rather than the evaluating the suitability of publishing this type of information on a wiki. Most candidates who attempted this question did gain a mark for stating that a wiki can be edited by anybody and some also stated that this would make the data unreliable.

Task 4 – Database

Questions 20 and 21

The importing of the csv files and creation of primary keys and relationships between the tables were well done. The field names and data types were mostly set correctly although the date field was not always imported in the correct DMY format resulting in date import errors and blank records in this field in the report.

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A few candidates incorrectly included an ID field in their database structure. Evidence of the relationship did not always confirm that a one-to-many relationship had been created as the screenshot was often captured during the process of creating the relationship rather than capturing the outcome after the process was complete. A screenshot of the relationship dialogue box will evidence the relationship type. The relationship diagram will only be credited if it shows the single and one-to-many infinity symbols confirming the relationship type.

Question 22

Entry of the new record was assessed in the database Report 2. Most candidates entered the new record accurately although data entry errors occasionally appeared in '*Seattle*' and '*Alaska*'. Candidates did not achieve the mark if they overwrote the first record in the database (*BS001SE, 23 – Aug – 16*)) instead of entering this data as a new record.

Question 23

The first report used fields from the cruises table and was done well by candidates who attempted this question. The report title was usually entered in a larger font size at the top of the report. Occasionally this title contained data entry or capitalisation errors, or displayed additional text such as '*Query 1*' in the title area. The search was based on two criterion with most correctly finding cruises that departed from '*Miami*' but searching with the OR operator was not always completed well with several results showing '*Art AND Miami*' OR '*Music*'. The sort order was usually correct. Most included the correct fields in the report although these were often in the wrong order as, without manual intervention, the software placed the sort field at the start of the report. This can be avoided by setting the sort order in the report structure rather than during the creation of the report. Occasionally data in the '*Destination*' field was truncated. Most fitted the report to a single page wide and presented this in portrait orientation. Calculating the number of passengers was usually done well although a few candidates positioned the calculated field at the bottom of each page (page footer) instead of at the end of the report as instructed and this caused an error in the calculation. This calculation was not always placed under the *Passengers* field. Screenshot evidence was provided of the formula used which confirmed that some had used COUNT instead of SUM. The label '*Total passengers*' was usually positioned correctly but occasionally contained errors such as '*Passengers*' followed by a colon. Few candidates managed to display their identification details in the header on every page of the report. Some entered these in the footer but the majority entered them in the report header rather than the page header and as a result printed on the first page only.

Question 24

The second report used fields from both tables and searched on three fields using a wildcard and search operators. The most common errors were the wildcard search on '*sea*' and searching for those with a duration of 14 or more. The wildcard search often only found records beginning and/or ending with '*sea*' and did not find those where the ship name contained '*sea*' (*Hanseatic*). For the duration search candidates often confused the greater than > and less than < operators, or did not use = operator to find records that were equal to 14. A few candidates did not attempt to create the new calculated field but those that did usually used the correct calculation. The new field heading was usually entered accurately although this was not always fully visible. The correct fields were usually displayed although these were not always in the correct order with the sort fields being positioned first. Data in this report required more manipulation to ensure all data was fully visible. The sort on a two criterion was generally well done although the '*Duration*' field was occasionally displayed in ascending order. The report title was usually entered in a larger font size at the top of the report. The title area occasionally included additional text such as '*Query 1*' or the title contained data entry or capitalisation errors. The title descender 'g' was not always fully visible as the text box had not been adjusted to accommodate the larger font size. Most fitted the report to one landscape page as instructed.

Question 25

The database extract used fields from both tables and searched on two fields. The most common error was including records that were equal to 4 instead of <4. The field order was usually correct although a number of candidates included the '*Theme*' field as well. Some candidates showed no evidence of attempting this task.

Question 26

Most candidates who completed **Question 25** provided evidence of exporting the extract as an rtf file. A few candidates exported this extract in the wrong file type. Screenshot evidence often showed the save process rather than the capturing the outcome of the file saved in the work area after the process was complete.

Task 4 – Document 2

Question 27

A few candidates inserted a screenshot of the extract rather than importing the saved rtf extract into the document. Candidates were required to manipulate the table so the data displayed on one line but it was common to find text wrapped in the '*Ship_Name*' field. Occasionally the extract contained a title and did not fit within the column width. Most provided evidence in **Question 5** that the *TC-table* style had been created and saved but this was often not applied to the extract as the table content was not displayed in a serif font style, centred with italic enhancement. The space below the extract was usually greater than 6 point. In a few cases the extract was printed as a separate document or database report and some credit could be given for the searching and sorting where correct.

Question 28

If available this version of the document was assessed. In most cases there was evidence of good proofreading and document presentation skills, particularly where the styles had been created and applied correctly. Spacing between items was generally consistent although a few candidates left large gaps between some paragraphs for no apparent reason. The columns were not always aligned at the top of the page and the bulleted list and/or table were sometimes split across columns. Occasionally there was a widow or orphan, most commonly where a subheading had been left at the bottom of a column.

Question 29

This question tested Assessment Objective 1 – recall, select and communicate knowledge and understanding of ICT. Most candidates attempted the question but responses varied from centre to centre. Despite creating and using styles in the word processing task very few candidates were able to explain why styles are used, other than to improve the appearance of the document. Some candidates wrote about Cascading Style Sheets but could still not explain why they are used. The explanation of the purpose of spell check software usually lacked detail and responses such as '*to check spelling of words*' or '*to correct errors*' were often given without recognising that the purpose is to identify data entry errors and assist the user in reducing errors. Several responses included details about checking and correcting grammar which was not relevant to the question. Most candidates identified at least one limitation of spellcheck software such as its inability to recognise words in another language, names or proper nouns, and some mentioned limitations on the size of the dictionary.

Task 5 – Mail Merge

Question 30

The mail merge task was well done with many candidates producing error-free work. Most candidates correctly replaced the text and chevrons in the master document with the correct fields from the data source file. The most common errors continue to be not removing all the chevrons, deleting punctuation and spaces between the fields, and removing existing line spaces as the merge fields are inserted.

Question 31

Most candidates replaced the required text with their name. Some placed the footer details in the header or did not enter their full details including their centre number and candidate number. A few candidates did not print the master document and therefore did not provide evidence that mail merge had been used to create the letters.

Question 32

The merge selection was based on one search criterion and was completed well. Some candidates provided screenshot evidence of a tick box selection method which did not provide evidence that an automated filter had been used. A few candidates continue to use '*find*' or '*find in field*' to select recipients at the printing stage which did not merge the letters.

Question 33

Almost all candidates merged and printed the letters as specified.

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Task 6 – Printing the Evidence Document

Question 34

A small number of candidates did not submit a printout of the Evidence Document. It is essential that candidates print their Evidence Document towards the end of the examination time, regardless of whether they have finished the paper. Candidates should make sure that their screenshots are large enough for the evidence to be legible and that cropping/resizing has not removed essential evidence.

Task 7 – Presentation

Question 35

Most candidates successfully imported the 5 slides and presented each as a title and bulleted list. A small number of candidates did not enter their name after the text as instructed and a few introduced errors by retyping the text '*Presented by:*'. Marks were not awarded where incorrect software had been used with the rtf file opened, manipulated and printed in word processing software.

Question 36

Most candidates entered the master slide items so they displayed consistently on all slides in the presentation. Some candidate's master slide items overlapped the data on the slides or appeared in a different position on the second and subsequent slides which meant that they did not achieve the mark. Built-in slide designs can be used but often apply a different layout to slide 1 so candidates must ensure the design chosen meets all the master slide requirements.

Question 37

Slide 1 was usually formatted with a title slide layout so the title was larger than the subtitle and both were centred on the slide. A few candidates left a bullet on the subtitle.

Question 38

Presenter notes were not well understood and very few candidates entered the text as presenter/speaker notes or printed as presenter/speaker notes. A few candidates incorrectly entered the presenter/speaker notes as a comment. Some entered the presenter/speaker text onto slide 5, usually as an additional bullet or after the slide title, and then printed this as a full page slide. Occasionally the text was entered in the header/footer area. Where the presenter notes were entered correctly they often contained data entry or capitalisation errors, most commonly the full stop was omitted.

Question 39

Printing the presentation using a layout of 6 slides to the page was generally well done. A few printed all slides as full-page slides.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Paper 0417/31 **Practical Test B**

Key messages

For this examination, the main points to note are as follows:

* Candidates need a better understanding of how to analyse a stylesheet. This should include both positive and negative elements, rather than just a description of its effects.
* Candidates need to understand the importance of following the instructions on the question paper.
* Candidates need to take greater care with the accuracy of data entry.
* Candidates need to check their HTML meets the requirements of the question and edit it if appropriate rather than relying upon their WYSIWYG software to do so.

General comments

There were significant differences in the range of results from centre to centre and from candidate to candidate within centres. The paper gave a good spread of marks and candidate errors were spread evenly over the sections of the paper.

A small number of candidates did not print their name, centre number and candidate number on some of the documents submitted for assessment. Without clear printed evidence of the author of the work, examiners are unable to mark these pages. It is not acceptable for candidates to annotate their printouts by hand with their name as there is no real evidence that they are the originators of the work.

In this session some candidates printed work that was too small to read even using magnification devices. Candidates must ensure that all text can be easily read with the naked eye.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates produced accurate text entry in cell A1, although there were a number of case errors. Most candidates deleted the required rows, although some candidates deleted one row too few or one row too many. A significant number of candidates did not fill cells A5 to B13 and D5 to F13 with a white fill (or remove the gridlines within these areas) to format the spreadsheet as shown. Formatting rows 3, 4, 15 and 16 in a consistent serif font with centre alignment and text wrap caused a number of issues for candidates. Many of whom, omitted some of these elements. Almost all candidates set the merged cell to white text on a dark green background, but not all right aligned the text within this cell. A number of candidates did not reduce the row height of row 2.

Question 2

Most candidates placed the correct elements in the header as specified, although a few candidates omitted one of the elements.

Question 3

While many candidates created the named range as specified in the question paper, there were a number of them who introduced case errors in the name.

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Question 4

The VLOOKUP function was appropriately used by most candidates, along with the single cell reference and the named range.

Question 5

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates. A few candidates used a named range, despite being instructed not to do so.

Question 6

Many candidates performed this question well, although a few candidates tried to use the contents of column G as the lookup reference. The contents of column G did not give correct results as there were two different categories (Job Codes) which were manufacturing jobs, so using column G always returned the rate of pay of 10.20, for employees with both M1 and M2 job codes.

Question 7

This question elicited many different responses from candidates. A significant number used the contract hours multiplied by the rate, rather than the hours worked multiplied by the rate. There were many other variations seen, including the use of addition, subtraction, division, and in some case more than just two columns.

Question 8

Almost all candidates completed this step as instructed.

Question 9

This question was rarely completed as specified. Many candidates used a COUNT function or a COUNTA function rather than using COUNTIF. Of those candidates who did attempt to use COUNTIF a number allowed workers who had worked a negative number of hours by including the inequality <>0 rather than >0.

Question 10

Most candidates calculated the total pay with 100% accuracy using an appropriate SUM function. The use of the 'AutoSum' function for this formula returns the correct value but incorrectly includes the empty cell K66.

Question 11

There were a number of data entry errors when replacing the hours worked for the specified employees. Some candidates did not copy the contract hours first, so workers who had fulfilled their contract hours would not have been paid.

Question 12

Most candidates formatted the Rate of Pay, Rate and Pay columns to euros with 2 decimal places. There were a surprising number of candidates who set these cells to pounds sterling. A small number of candidates also formatted the contract hours and hours worked columns as currency.

Question 13

Most candidates saved and printed the spreadsheet as specified showing the values. Some ignored the instruction to print this on a single page wide.

Question 14

Most candidates completed this as specified, although a few omitted turning on the row and column headings before printing. Some candidates did not resize all columns to show the formulae in full.

Question 15

Most candidates who attempted this question extracted those employees working in London or Zagreb, but fewer did a valid wildcard search on the word Sales (some used starts with… as the criterion for this part of the search).

Question 16

A number of candidates omitted this step, of those who attempted it, some selected descending order and others did not select the whole range of data. This meant that as the search was performed the integrity of the data was lost.

Question 17

Most candidates completed this well, although some did not hide row 67.

Question 18

Most candidates hid the required columns, although a few who attempted the extract did not hide any columns.

Question 19

Most candidates saved and printed the spreadsheet extract showing the values.

Question 20

Few candidates completed this step as specified. The question required 4 separate items of test data while many candidates typed lengthy descriptions describing what normal, abnormal and extreme data are. The question required the candidates to apply this theoretical knowledge to this practical scenario and required only the data for the months, not full dates.

Question 21

A written evaluation was required whereas some candidates corrected the style h6 instead. Many correctly identified that it is a class rather than a style, that the hierarchy of the fonts did not contain a comma (but did have a semi-colon), and the extra 'l' in align. Few commented upon the font-size statement being correct and working. A number of candidates submitted notes saying that the whole style was 'perfect' or 'wonderful.'

Question 22

Most candidates completed this as specified, although not all candidates displayed all the required details in the folder, the image dimensions being the most common omission.

Question 23

Many candidates created the table to look similar to the question, but a significant number did not include the dimensions for all the relevant cells within their table structure, presumably assuming that the contents of the cells (particularly the images) would resize all cells for them. Many candidates overrode the 1100 table width by setting the overall table to fit within 100% (or other percentage) of the table width. This may have been overridden by the default settings within their editing package. Whilst WYSIWYG packages are useful, candidates must be able to edit the HTML to ensure that their web page structure meets the question paper requirements. Another area where candidates sometimes found difficulty was in removing the table borders from their final webpage. It is good practice to leave them switched on whilst working on the table, but many candidates did not remove them before the final submission.

Question 24

Many candidates completed this as specified, with a width of 400 pixels for the image, but a small number distorted the image by adding an erroneous image height attribute to the tag.

Question 25

Most candidates completed this as specified, although there were a number of case errors and some candidates who used the underscore in place of the hyphen. This was usually set to style h1.

Question 26

Almost all candidates placed the correct images in the correct cells.

Question 27

This question was not completed well. There were 5 images on the page and many candidates only set alt text on four of the five images. The text often stated what was on the image but did not describe it, so where the image included the text 'cloud storage' many candidates added 'image of cloud storage' which was incorrect. It was the image of 'a button used to select cloud storage'. Candidates must ensure that if an image is not available the message informs the user what is there, in a form that could be used by a text reader so that partially sighted users could also understand the table layout and know what they are looking at/where to click.

Question 28

Many candidates completed this as specified, but a number included a hyperlink to the file SDStext.txt rather than the text from the file.

Question 29

Most candidates completed this as specified, although there were a number of absolute file paths within this, which would not work when the webpage was placed on a different computer unless it had an identical file/folder structure for these files.

Question 30

This question gained mixed responses from candidates. Some attained full marks but many stylesheets included errors which included:

- The use of pixels rather than points for the font-size.
- Center spelt as centre.
- Colour codes in BRG (or other) formats rather than RGB.
- Setting the font colour in style h2 rather than style h1.
- Adding the candidate details at the end of the stylesheet rather than at the start as specified in the question paper.

The screenshot of the browser window did not always show the whole of the web page and a few printouts were from web authoring packages rather than a web browser.

A number of candidates did not provide evidence of the HTML. Often a link to a file was placed in the document instead.

Those candidates who included screenshots of the HTML source sometimes cropped them excessively so that important information was missing.

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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Paper 0417/32
Practical Test B

Key messages

For this examination, the main points to note are as follows:

- Candidates need a better understanding of how ordered and unordered lists are structured within HTML.
- Candidates need to understand the importance of following the instructions on the question paper carefully.
- Candidates need to take greater care with the accuracy of data entry.
- Candidates need to check their HTML meets the requirements of the question and edit it if appropriate rather than relying upon their WYSIWYG software to do so.

General comments

There were significant differences in the range of results from centre to centre and from candidate to candidate within centres. The paper gave a good spread of marks and candidate errors were spread evenly over the website and spreadsheet sections of the paper, although fewer successful solutions were seen to **Questions 1** and **2** which tested AO1 and AO3 from the syllabus.

A small number of candidates did not print their name, centre number and candidate number on some of the documents submitted for assessment. Without clear printed evidence of the author of the work, examiners are unable to mark these pages. It is not acceptable for candidates to annotate their printouts by hand with their name as there is no real evidence that they are the originators of the work.

In this session some candidates printed work that was too small to read even using magnification devices. Candidates must ensure that all text can be easily read with the naked eye. Candidates need to be aware of the need to make their work readable to an examiner. Examples of material that was difficult to read include text such as the CSS, or the HTML printed against a black background which, coupled with very small text, was extremely difficult to read. In some cases; it was even impossible to decipher even with high levels of magnification.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A number of candidates completed this question extremely well, applying their underpinning knowledge of ordered and unordered list syntax in HTML to the HTML that the trainee had produced. Acceptable solutions were seen where candidates had recreated the HTML with <ol>   and tags placed correctly to generate the required effects. Other correct solutions provided typed descriptions of the lack of these tags and their placement. Either solution answered the wording of the task set and although analyse questions normally require written/typed answers, the analysis of the HTML had to be completed correctly for candidates to find a working solution. This question proved challenging for many candidates, some of whom did not appear to have detailed knowledge of ordered and unordered lists.

Question 2

Responses to this question appeared to vary centre by centre. Many candidates had clearly studied the 3 web layers in depth and attained all or most of the correct answers but responses from some centres indicated that candidates did not know the names of these layers so could not apply them to the four parts of the question.

Question 3

This preparatory question for the web page creation elicited mixed results. Most candidates created the folder as specified and placed all the correct files within it, although there were occasional typographical errors in the folder name. The image manipulation was completed as specified by fewer candidates; horizontal reflection of an image appeared more challenging to some than other aspects of this question. Cropping the image to remove the hard disk drive and place an equal red background around the solid state drive was not always completed as specified, nor the instruction to save this square image with sides of 600 pixels. Despite clear instructions on file names, these files were often saved with an SDS prefix, for example SDSdisk4, of incorrectly named, for example: for the final image: disks4 rather than disk4.

Question 4

Almost all candidates displayed the contents of the folder, although some did not display the folder name by excessively cropping it from the top and a significant number of candidates did not display the image dimensions within this folder.

Question 5

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates. A few candidates did not use a single table, but many candidates did not follow the instruction that table borders and gridlines must appear on the final web page. This instruction required candidates to switch on the borders for both the table and each element of table data in both the HTML and CSS.

Question 6

Most candidates completed this as specified, although there were a number of case errors and some candidates who used the underscore in place of the hyphen. This was usually set to style h1.

Question 7

Most candidates completed the placing of the correct text in the cell as specified, but fewer included the original paragraph breaks by inserting either additional <h2> or <br> tags.

Question 8

Almost all candidates placed the image as instructed, the alternate text was often included but did not always display an appropriate message to a user should the image not be available. This message should describe to the user what is missing, examples like: 'image disk4 is missing' does not suggest to the user what the image depicts.

Question 9

Most candidates completed this question well, with most setting the text to style h3.

Question 10

Many candidates added the text as specified, although there were a number of case errors seen. Most set this into style h3 and many of the candidates set the hyperlink as specified.

Question 11

Although this question was completed well by the majority of candidates, there were a small number of typographical errors in the data entry. Most candidates set this text into style h3.

Question 12

Although almost all candidates attached the stylesheet to the web page, there were a number of candidate errors seen. Where candidates included the file path, this would only work on computers with an identical file structure to the one used to create the web page. A number of candidates set the stylesheet as specified, yet over-wrote the styles using in-line styles within their HTML.

Question 13

This question appeared to present more of a challenge to many candidates. Many set styles h1, h2 and h3 to the correct font colour and centre aligned this text. The font-size statements for these styles were less well completed with statements like line-height or height used instead. A significant number of candidates erroneously set the font-sizes to pixels instead of points. The statement to remove collapsed borders should have been placed in the table section of the stylesheet but was frequently seen in the td definition. Conversely the padding should have been set within the table cells (as well as the table) but was frequently seen set at table level only. Many candidates set the background-color to the correct hexadecimal number, but fewer did this for the body section of the CSS, many placing this in the 'table', table data ('td') or even 'background' section. Most candidates added their name and numbers to the stylesheet, many correctly, but a number set this as HTML and even Javascript comments rather than as CSS. Most candidates displayed this in the Evidence document as specified.

The screenshot of the browser window did not always show the whole of the web page with the address bar visible and a few printouts were from web authoring packages rather than a web browser.

A number of candidates failed to provide evidence of the HTML. Often a link to a file was placed in the document instead.

Those candidates who included screenshots of the HTML source sometimes cropped them excessively so that important information was missing.

Question 14

Most candidates inserted two new rows at the top of the spreadsheet. The text to be placed in cell A1 often contained errors in case, spacing or using an underscore rather than a hyphen within the text. The cells A1 to G1 were frequently merged correctly, although some candidates included cells A2 to G2 within this merged cell. This cell was frequently formatted as specified, although the most common error/omission was to set the text into a sans-serif font rather than a serif font. A small number of candidates left this text black rather than setting it to white. Row 3 was frequently set as specified, although a small number of candidates did not increase the font size to 18 points. The diagram in **Question 14** indicated that row 2 needed to be much smaller than other rows in the spreadsheet. This was often omitted by the candidates. The spreadsheet was often saved as specified.

Question 15

Most candidates completed this as specified although there were some omissions in both header and footer and typographical errors in the footer. A number of candidates did not place these elements in the centre or on the left as required.

Question 16

This function was frequently entered as specified in the question paper, although a small number of candidates used a less efficient range of cells to that shown in the mark scheme.

Question 17

A significant number of candidates used functions other than ROUNDDOWN to round the final result to 2 decimal places, often electing to use ROUND or ROUNDUP. A number of candidates did not work out that the price per GB was calculated by taking the contents of the Price column and dividing this by the contents of the Capacity column. Some candidates reversed this function.

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Question 18

Almost all candidates replicated their formulae as specified, although some candidates did not display all of their columns in full.

Question 19

Most candidates applied appropriate formatting to the specified rows of the spreadsheet, although a number of candidates set the currency values as pounds sterling rather than Euros.

Question 20

Most candidates saved and printed the entire spreadsheet showing the formulae, although not all displayed the row and column headings as required by the question paper. A significant number of candidates did not ensure that the contents of all cells were fully visible, this was especially important with the longer formulae in column C.

Question 21

Most candidates saved and printed the entire spreadsheet showing the values with the cells fully visible, but far fewer set two pages tall by one page wide.

Question 22

Most candidates, who attempted the extract, selected the drives by Samsing or OZT costing less than 200 Euros. Fewer candidates used the correct selection criteria for more than 240GB of storage capacity. The most common incorrect responses included the drives with a 240GB capacity as well as those of greater capacity.

Question 23

A significant number of candidates had errors in the sorting elements of the task. Some omitted this step, whilst other candidates did not get the hierarchy of the sorts as specified. A number of candidates did not retain the integrity of the data when performing their sorts. Most candidates saved and printed their extract as specified showing the values. A small number of candidates ignored the instruction to print this on a single page.