INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Paper 0983/11
Theory

Key messages

The paper was a good differentiator and allowed candidates to gain a good range of marks. Candidates were able to attempt many of the questions. The range of marks gained by the candidates was 0 to 61 which was in line with recent series and had a fairly even spread across the paper. This reflected that the paper was fair for all candidates.

The questions covered a range of different topics from the syllabus. As with previous sessions some of the topics had not been set previously whilst others have been set several times. This session, there was a decrease in the number of candidates giving a nil response to answers. Giving a response may mean that a candidate may be able to gain a mark. In some of the questions candidates were able to demonstrate understanding of the syllabus topic and gain high marks.

There is still a tendency for candidates to give brand names rather than the generic name. Brand names are ignored by the Examiners.

In order to improve the marks awarded in this paper, candidates must read the question carefully before answering it and then check back with the question to ensure they stay on topic and have not repeated elements of the question in their answer.

Candidates should also ensure that they check the command word of each question and then tailor their answer accordingly. Questions that ask for the candidate to describe, discuss or explain should be written in prose and not in tabular form with advantages in one column and disadvantages in the other. This was seen less this session but it was still evident and candidates did not then gain all the marks available. Candidates who performed well in this paper used specific and detailed language when replying to describe, evaluate and discuss type questions.

This session saw an improvement in the handwriting of the candidates. If handwriting is bad then Examiners struggle to read the answer. An Examiner will attempt to read the answer but keywords may be missed and hence marks not awarded.

General comments

The paper gave all candidates an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of ICT using a wide variety of topics.

In this session, there has been a reduction in candidates giving more answers than was requested by the question. When a question indicates a specific number of answers, candidates should only write one answer in each allocated space. For each allocated space, the first answer written is the only one that is marked. Also, any extra answers placed below the numbered responses are ignored even if they are correct.

When a question asks a candidate to circle 2 answers, as in **Question 1** of this paper, then the candidate's selections need to be clear and if the candidate changes their mind about their answer then it should be obvious which is the crossed out answer and then which is the answer that is to marked.

Candidates need to be clear in the answers given rather than using basic statements, such as 'it is quicker'. A good rule of thumb it to add 'because' and then give a valid reason.

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There appears to be a need for some candidates to expand their answers on to other parts of the examination paper. Some candidates use this extra area to write one or two words that could have been written below the actual answer given. It is important that, if extra space is needed, the candidate clearly writes where the extra part is written and writes the question number on the extra work. The paper is marked electronically, and if the candidate writes on extra sheets or on the blank pages/spaces in the examination paper, the extra elements or key points within it may be missed.

Candidates should read the question carefully before answering it as some questions may look similar to past paper questions but demand different responses.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was well answered by most candidates, with few omitting the question. Candidates were generally able to gain at least one of the marks for this question and a large proportion gained both marks.

Question 2

This question was generally well answered by the candidates.

(a) (i) This question was well answered by many of the candidates. There was a little confusion in **parts (i)** and **(ii)** with some candidates transposing their answers.

(ii) This question was well answered by many of the candidates. There was a little confusion in **parts (i)** and **(ii)** with some candidates transposing their answers.

(b) This question was challenging for some candidates. Those candidates that gave incorrect answers in **Question 2(a)** found the question more challenging. Some candidates repeated the items of **Question 2(a)** in their answers, namely sensors read analogue data. Many candidates were able to write about digital data being binary data and understood by a computer. However, candidates found explanations about analogue data more challenging, although some candidates were able to write that it was continuous and represented in a wave form. Analogue data is represented by a sine wave although if a candidate wrote waveform, then the Examiners gave credit, which may not be the same in future sessions.

Question 3

This question was challenging for many of the candidates, although **part (b)** was well answered by many candidates.

(a) This question was very challenging but many candidates attempted an answer. Many candidates confused layout with content and gave items that should have been included in a report, namely Name and Class, whilst others thought the question related to a database report so answered about fields etc. Some candidates wrote about radio buttons and drop down lists. It is important when answering a question like this one that candidates read the question thoroughly before answering it and then refer back to the stem as they write their answer. Some candidates gave one word answers when the question stated ‘describe’.

(b) This question was well answered by most of the candidates. Weaker responses included the content of the field or DD/MM/YYYY.

(c) This question was fairly well answered by the candidates, however, there were a number of nil responses. Some candidates misread the question and gave examples of data or explanations.

Question 4

This question was very challenging for many candidates. In order to gain full marks on this type of question, both correct similarities and differences need to be written about. There were a few good answers about the size of the potter and the print quality. There was a decrease in the incorrect comments about plotters only drawing graphs.

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Many candidates gave similarities such as both are output devices and both produce hard copy, but most were determined to differentiate the production of high quality output and give this as a difference instead of a similarity.

The quality of many responses to this question indicated that many candidates had never seen or used a plotter as some candidates stated that plotters punched holes or dots, perhaps confusing a plotter with a dot matrix printer. Many candidates did however recognise that plotters use ink.

Many candidates also misunderstood the question and based their answers around where the printer/plotter would be used writing about noise issues. It was good to see that a few candidates were able to give answers linked to laser printers producing ozone, but of these, not all managed to expand their answer to gain the expansion mark available and some thought that ozone was actually carbon dioxide.

In order for candidates to improve their technique in answering these types of questions, candidates should give clear differences rather than simply giving the opposite for example laser printers use toner and plotters do not. Candidates also need to be clear in what they write, for example, some candidates wrote that laser printers were faster but did not include what they were faster at printing.

Question 5

This question was very challenging for many of the candidates even though the topic had been set previously. As candidates found the question challenging, the Examiners allowed a mark for naming parts of the CPU, but this may not be the same in future series. Many candidates reworded the question in their answers. A common answer was that the CPU was the 'brain of the computer'; this did not answer the question and therefore gained no credit. Many of the answers were very general and some even mixed up the CPU with the computer. This was a technical question and therefore needed to be detailed in the answer. Some candidates attempted to explain the fetch execute cycle in their answers but thought that the CPU fetched data directly from the user or the input device, missing out the memory.

Question 6

Overall this was a very challenging question although candidates answered **part (a)** better than the other parts.

(a) This question was quite well answered and many candidates attempted it. There were some good answers given by the candidates, including that it was less portable than other types of computer and that it had a larger footprint due to the separate parts that formed it.

Most candidates were able to give both sides of the discussion so could have gained the full marks available but many gave generic answers without expanding on these. In order to improve examination techniques, candidates should give detailed answers or expand on their answers.

(b) This question about CAL was a very challenging question. The topic had been set previously but not for some time. Some candidates mixed up CAL (Computer Aided Learning) with CAD (Computer Aided Design), whilst others simply re-wrote the question i.e. CAL is where learning is aided by a computer. Some candidates misread the the question and gave answers to **part (c)** in this question.

(c) As with the previous question, many candidates found this question very challenging. Some candidates misread the question, giving benefits and drawbacks rather than features of CAL. Sometimes, benefits and drawbacks can be features and, where this happened, Examiners gave the mark. In order to improve at answering this type of question, candidates need to give more detail in their answer. Some candidates gave more than the three answers requested; extra answers were not given credit.

Question 7

This question was quite well answered although **part (b)** was very challenging for candidates.

(a) This part of the question was fairly well answered by candidates. However, as with other questions that asked for features, many candidates answered with benefits and drawbacks. Where the benefits matched with a feature, the Examiners allowed the mark for this session, but this may not

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be the case in other sessions. This change to asking about features did have a negative effect on the marks awarded.

(b) This was a new topic for the examination and therefore was a very challenging question. AI is a very current topic in ICT, therefore it was surprising that many candidates found this question challenging. There were many good answers given about the use of AI in shopping but unfortunately, they did not answer the question that had been set and therefore gained no credit. Few candidates correctly noted that AI can make recommendations, personalise the service and predict customer behaviour.

(c) (i) This was a very challenging question, but every candidate attempted it. In order to improve the answering of questions of this sort, candidates must be more detailed in their answers. For example, 'the screen brightness needs to be reduced' is a subjective answer, but 'the screen brightness must be reduced to match the brightness of the room' is a much better answer. Examiners gave no credit for the use of 'taking breaks' as this did not give enough detail to answer the question.

Candidates appeared to know about the problems, but their answers were generic lacking specifics e.g. wear glasses, turn down the brightness of the computer

(ii) This question was answered better than **part (i)**. As with **part (i)**, Examiners did not give credit for 'taking breaks' unless the answer was expanded upon i.e. take exercise.

Question 8

This question was done fairly well and there were a few good answers.

(a) The cloud as a topic had been set many times but this question proved to be challenging for many of the candidates. The main issue was that candidates did not read the question fully before writing their answers. Many candidates missed the stem and repeated what it said in their answer, therefore gaining no credit. In order to improve answers, candidates must read both the question and any other material related to it. Some candidates continue to write about the cloud from their own viewpoint, i.e., that it is a backup system for their smartphone rather than it was a set of remote servers run by a third party.

Due to the reference to storage in the stem, some candidates gave answers relating to the operation of the cloud rather than what was meant by the cloud. Examiners gave credit for these answers, however this may not be the case in future sessions.

(b) This was better answered than **part (a)**, with many candidates giving good points. However as with other questions in this paper, some candidates wrote about benefits and drawbacks rather than the characteristics that were asked for. Other candidates mixed up the internet with the web, but Examiners gave credit where the answer was correct even though it may have been vague. This may not happen in future sessions.

Question 9

Overall, this question was challenging for many candidates although most attempted to answer it.

(a) This should have been a straightforward question. Part of the question included any issues that could occur when uploading the file and a solution to this problem. Some candidates wrote only about the uploading of the file, but to gain full marks both parts needed to be answered correctly. Even though all the candidates would have had to carry out this process at some time, it was surprising that many could not explain the process of moving the files from the HDD to the computer. Some repeated the question and wrote 'upload the file', whilst others wrote copy the file without mentioning pasting it. Those that produced the correct answer wrote copy and paste or slide/drag and drop the file. Fewer candidates wrote about an issue and solution with many just giving the issue without any solution to the problem. In order to improve the answering of questions of this type, the question should not be repeated as part of the answer.

(b) (i) This part of **9(b)** was answered better than the second part. The question asked for the media rather than the device, for example, DVD rather than DVD reader. Some candidates wrote optical mark reader which is not a storage media but a device. Optical storage on its own was too generic.

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(ii) This part of the question was more challenging for candidates, many of which wrote pen drive or SSD. These answers refer to drives; therefore they do not answer the question. The media used in an SSD is flash memory, therefore this is what the Examiners were expecting in the answers given.

(c) This question was very challenging for candidates, many of which wrote that data protection legislation was required as it protected data which was a re-write of the question. When marks were awarded, it was usually for protecting the rights of the individual. This remains a very challenging topic.

Question 10

This question was challenging, with **part (a)** answered better than **part (b)**.

(a) This part of the question was better answered than **10(b)**. Some candidates mixed up phishing with pharming and smishing. Most candidates were able to gain at least a mark for stating that users are tricked into revealing personal information. However, some candidates still write that personal data is stolen, to steal means to take away but the personal data is copied or sent, retaining the original.

(b) This question was very challenging for many of the candidates. In order to improve the answering of questions of this type, candidates must give more detail in their answers. Some candidates gave answers like firewall and using a spam filter, neither of these methods would stop phishing attacks.

Question 11

This question was quite challenging for the candidates, especially when explaining the purpose of the head section of a web page. Many candidates however could write down an element found in the head section; the most common correct answer being title. The Examiners in this session allowed title written as a tag, namely <title>, but this may not be the same in future sessions.

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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Paper 0983/02
Practical Test

Key messages

- Candidates must enter accurately text in bold on the question paper.
- Candidates must be able to distinguish between the typeface categories of serif and sans-serif font types and select a named font for the type specified.
- Candidates must be able to differentiate between left and right when placing objects in their documents.
- Candidates must base new document styles on the 'normal' (Microsoft Office) or 'default' (Open Office) paragraph style.
- Candidates must retain existing styles applied to document recall text.
- Candidates must use proofing techniques to identify errors and ensure consistency of presentation in their documents.
- Candidates must be able to distinguish between the database page header/footer area and the database report header/footer area and understand which is appropriate to use.
- Candidates must ensure they include their identification details in tasks before printing as instructed on the question paper.
- Candidates must produce legible screenshots which are large enough to be read and show the outcome of an action rather than the skill process.
- Candidates must print their Evidence Document as this contains supporting evidence that could substantially improve their grade.

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 tasks in the paper within the time allowed and most showed a good level of skill. Where tasks were omitted, it tended to be the database reports or the chart in the presentation. Generally, candidates who did attempt the database task produced good work and compared to previous sessions, completed this work with a greater degree of accuracy. A few candidates continue to submit work without their typed identification details which cannot be marked. The Evidence Document is often printed with miniature or cropped screenshots making it difficult or impossible to assess the evidence they are showing.

Candidates must be able to distinguish between the typeface categories of serif and sans-serif font types. These are not the actual names of font styles but categories of font type with specific attributes. Candidates must be able to select an appropriate font for the font type specified.

Text to be entered by the candidate as part of a task is displayed in bold on the question paper. Marks are available for accurate data entry of this text which must be keyed exactly as shown, including punctuation and capitalisation. Candidates are advised to carefully check their data entry to ensure it matches the text on the question paper. Common errors included incorrect capitalisation, incorrect or missing characters, omission of spaces, truncated headings, superfluous punctuation and dashes used instead of underscores and vice versa.

Candidates are instructed 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 – capturing the '*Save As*' dialogue box is insufficient as the save process is incomplete. Screenshot evidence is often too small and/or faint to be read even using magnification devices. Candidates must ensure that all

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screenshots can be easily read with the naked eye, and centres should ensure there is sufficient ink in the printer for candidates to produce legible printouts. Candidates should take care when cropping and resizing screenshots to ensure important elements are still shown such as primary keys and all the fields in the database table structure.

For every task the question paper prompts candidates to include their name, centre number and candidate number 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 this is insufficient to prove they are the originators of the work.

Some centres are still submitting stapled work which should be avoided. This session saw some centres sealing the Assessment Record Folders with sticky address labels. Some of these labels stuck to the candidates' work which caused issues with the work ripping when examiners tried to open the ARF to extract the work. Any attempt to seal the ARF must be avoided. 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. It is not necessary to put the individual ARFs in separate envelopes or plastic wallets. 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. This session saw an increase in the number of centres submitting loose work which was not held in any type of container. The candidates' work must be separated by candidate number and submitted in the original hard-copy printed Assessment Record Folders that are provided to centres. Printed or photocopied Assessment Record Folders should only be used after a centre has run out of the provided original Assessment Record Folders.

Comments on specific questions

Task 1 – *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 read, or essential evidence had been cropped out. A small number did not print identification details on every page of the document so marks could only be awarded for pages where the identification details were printed. A small minority did not present the evidence document for marking.

Task 2 – *Document*

Question 1

All candidates opened the correct file and most saved it correctly with the specified file name. The file was occasionally saved in the original RTF format instead of the format of the word processing software being used. A few did not enter the file name exactly as shown on the question paper with some differences in case and the use of a dash instead of an underscore in the file name. Most candidates produced a screenshot of the folder contents after the file had been saved which provided the evidence required. Occasionally, no evidence of the file type was seen. Most candidates retained the page setup settings as instructed although a small number incorrectly changed the page orientation to landscape. A few candidates made changes to one or more of the paragraph styles that had already been created and applied to the recall text, even though the question paper stated that no changes should be made to these.

Question 2

The majority of candidates entered an automated page number right aligned in the header of the document. Occasionally, an automated field had not been used with the keyed number 1 appearing on all pages. Most entered their name, centre number and candidate number right aligned in the footer. A few entered only their name and did not include the centre and/or candidate number. 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

Sorting the list into alphabetical order was usually completed well. Candidates who completed the sort manually often had one or more items out of place. Occasionally the source text had been replaced with initial capitals at the start of each line, most commonly seen at the start of the last line.

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Question 4

Most candidates applied bullets to the correct text although a few did not include the last item in the list. Any consistent bullet style was acceptable. A small number of candidates applied a numbered list to this text instead of a bulleted list. Most candidates successfully indented the bullets the required distance from the left margin although occasionally the text instead of the bullets was indented, or the indent was less than 1.5 centimetres. The list was not always displayed in single line spacing with no space before and after each line.

Question 5

Setting the required text to two equally spaced columns with the correct spacing between the columns was generally done well. Not all candidates controlled the text displayed in columns with some applying the two-column layout to the entire document or including the final paragraph in the column selection. Several did not include the last full stop in their selection. The initial column break was occasionally inserted below rather than above the subheading and sometimes a page break was inserted instead of a section break. The space between the columns was not always changed from the default value.

Question 6

The creation and storage of the subhead style was well done by the most candidates. Common errors included capitalisation or typographical errors in the style name, an underscore used instead of a dash, or the style containing additional formatting not listed on the question paper. A number of candidates did not base the style on the 'default' or 'normal' paragraph style as instructed. A common error was for the style to be based on the *TMF-body* style as the cursor was positioned in body style text when the style was created, so unless changed the new style inherited the formatting already set for *TMF-body* along with the new attributes set. The style formatting was mostly set correctly although some candidates did not set the font formatting to display all capitals and some incorrectly entered 'serif' as the font name which is not a named font style. A named font style with attributes of the serif typeface category must be selected and applied such as Times New Roman, Georgia, Garamond etc. Other candidates set *'Arial'* as the font style name which is not a serif font style. A screenshot of the *TMF-subhead* style provided details of the settings created and in **Question 7** the subheadings needed to match the settings seen in this screenshot.

Question 7

Most candidates correctly identified the five subheadings in the document and applied their *TMF-subhead* style to each. The formatting of the subheading text did not always match the settings seen in the screenshot evidence for **Question 6**, most commonly where the five subheadings were displayed in capitals but this had not been set in the style settings, or where Arial had been set as the font style but the subheading text in the document appeared in Times New Roman. A few candidates did not provide any evidence of creating the *TMF-subhead* style or did not print the Evidence Document so the mark for applying the created style to the subheadings could not be awarded.

Question 8

Most candidates located the table and deleted the correct row. A few candidates deleted the data but left an empty row in place.

Question 9

Most candidates adjusted the row height to 1.5 centimetres and provided screenshot evidence of this. A few candidates captured screenshot evidence of changing the table height instead of the row or cell height.

Question 10

This question was usually completed well. The majority of candidates formatted the last row of the table as instructed although a few applied this formatting to the last two rows or to the first row of the table. Centring the text vertically within the cell was not always done correctly with some candidates inserting extra space to try and centre the text rather than using the functions of the software. The row height should have been set to 1.5 centimetres so the centring could be assessed but occasionally the row height was insufficient to evidence this or the required cells had not been merged so the vertical centring was not evident on the wrapped text in the first cell. The light grey shading was occasionally applied to the text and not as a background fill to the cell, or it was much darker than 20-30 per cent so the text was not legible.

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Question 11

Some candidates did not adjust the column widths to display the data on one line, most commonly for the text '*Non-affiliated runners'* in the fourth row. Most applied 1 point black internal and external gridlines although the thickness of the lines was not always consistent and some applied coloured or dotted/dashed lines. The majority displayed the table data and borders within the column width but the spacing after the table was not always maintained.

Question 12

Most candidates imported the correct image and placed it in the correct paragraph. Occasionally the image was missing, placed in the wrong paragraph or positioned above/below the specified paragraph. Most rotated the image 180° as instructed but a few candidates also reflected (flipped) the image, so the runner faced the left.

Question 13

Cropping the image to remove the sky was generally well done. A few candidates cropped too much so the top of the clouds were no longer visible. Most candidates applied text wrap to the image and resized it correctly although occasionally the image was distorted. Aligning the image to the right of the column and top of the correct paragraph proved more problematical with some candidates aligning it to the left of the column instead of the right.

Question 14

The overall presentation of the document was mainly good. Most documents were presented in portrait orientation with the table and/or list rarely split over columns or pages. The page margins were not always consistent as the column section was sometimes indented resulting in uneven margins. Good proofreading skills were not always evident as widows/orphans were not controlled and the columns/pages did not always align at the top of the page. The flow of text in the column section was not always correct suggesting the column formatting had been applied in several separate steps, and on occasions the table had been moved to a different place in the document. The most common error was changes made to the formatting of the pre-defined title, body and/or table styles which had already been applied to the relevant source text and should not have been changed. The spacing below the longest column was often more than the 6-points set in the *TMF-body* style.

Task 3 – *Database*

Question 15

Importing the csv file and setting the primary key were generally well done. Most candidates attempting this question set the data types as given on the question paper as no changes were required from the software defaults. The most common error was setting the *Pace_KM/h* as an integer value instead of decimal value or for this screenshot to show the data type as Date/Time. Screenshot evidence was occasionally cropped so not all twelve fields were shown. A few candidates incorrectly included an ID field in their table structure. Some candidates provided screenshot evidence of steps in the software Import wizard which did not always show all the fields and data types or that the primary key had been set.

Question 16

This question produced a mixed response. Most candidates were able to change the field data type but formatting this to display hh:mm:ss was more challenging with many displaying the times in AM/PM format or as h:mm:ss. A few candidates did not attempt this question.

Question 17

There were very few issues importing the second table with candidates using the correct field names and data types as no changes were required from the software defaults. The primary key was usually set correctly although a few candidates included an ID field and set this as the primary key. Screenshot evidence of the table structure was not always provided for both the second and/or third tables.

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Question 18

There were very few issues importing the third table with candidates using the correct field names and data types. As the primary key was given in the question paper there was little issue setting this correctly. Occasionally an ID field was included in the table structure, and this was set as the primary key. Screenshot evidence of the table structure was not always provided for both the second and/or third tables.

Question 19

Where the primary keys in the tables were set correctly most candidates created the correct one-to-many relationships between the three tables and provided evidence of this. Some candidates used four tables to create the relationships - the correct link was usually shown between the race and club tables, but the race table was then duplicated with a separate link between the age table and the copy of the race table. This did not link the three tables together to create a relational database. The screenshot evidence supplied did not always provide sufficient evidence of one-to-many relationships created. A screenshot of the relationship dialogue box will evidence the relationship type. The relationship diagram can only be credited if it shows the single and one-to-many infinity symbols confirming the relationship type.

Question 20

This question produced a mixed response. Most candidates provided screenshot evidence of using an automated search function to locate the specified record and then made the required changes which were assessed in Report 2. Evidence of any automated selection method was credited. Some candidates made no attempt to edit the record as instructed.

Question 21

The first report used fields from the race and club tables and was done well by those candidates who attempted it. The report title was usually entered in a larger font size at the top of the report although this occasionally contained data entry or capitalisation errors, displayed additional text such as '*Query 1*' and/or the '*g*' descender was not fully visible. The search on two criteria was completed well by most. Occasionally the *Age* search found records that equalled 30, or were less than 30 instead of less than or equal to 30. Some only searched for areas starting and/or ending with *Scot* instead of using a wildcard search to find all records containing *Scot*. The sort was not always set for both fields with several candidates sorting in descending order of the *Age* data only. Most displayed the correct fields, but these were not always in the correct order, most commonly with the two sort fields as the first two fields in the report. Setting the sort order in the report structure after the report has been created will help prevent the sort fields being placed first as they are when the sort is set in the wizard. Data in one or more fields, usually *Last_name, First_name* and/or *Club_name*, was often truncated and required manipulation to ensure all data was fully visible. Most presented the report in portrait orientation with the fields and data fitting a single page wide but only a limited number of candidates manipulated the data, so it printed on a single page only.

Question 22

The second report used fields from all three tables. The report title was usually entered in a larger font size at the top of the report although this occasionally contained data entry or capitalisation errors, displayed additional text such as '*Query 1*' and/or the height/width of the text box was not adjusted so the full title or the '*p*' descender were not fully visible. A few candidates omitted the word '*Club*' and/or keyed '*Competitors'* as '*Competitions'*. The search for '*FSE29*' or '*FSE39*' was well done but excluding clubs with the name '*Independent*' proved more challenging with some reports displaying only the fifteen '*Independent'* clubs. The new field heading was usually entered accurately with only a few candidates incorrectly entering an uppercase '*G*' on '*Age_graded'*, using a dash instead of an underscore or omitting the underscore completely. The calculation was not always attempted. Most candidates who correctly calculated the value also displayed the field as a percentage to 1 decimal place as instructed. The majority displayed the correct fields in the report, but where a field was omitted it was usually the *Age* field. The field order was usually correct although the sort field *Gender_result* was occasionally displayed as the first field. This can be avoided by setting the sort order in the report structure rather than during the creation of the report if a report wizard is used. Sorting *Gender_result* in descending order was completed well although a few candidates sorted in ascending order. The fields and data usually fitted to a single page wide but data in one or more fields, commonly *First_name*, *Last_name,* and/or *Club_name*, was often truncated and required manipulation to ensure all data was fully visible. Identification details were occasionally entered in the report footer so they only appeared on the last page of the report rather than in the page footer, so they printed at the bottom of every page. Occasionally these details were placed in the report header along with the report title. A small

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number of candidates omitted their identification details completely so their printed work could not then be assessed. A few candidates presented this report in portrait instead of landscape orientation.

Task 4 – *Presentation*

Question 23

Most candidates successfully imported the seven slides and presented each as a title and a bulleted list. A small number of candidates imported the data but did not display bullets on the slides, or made changes to the recalled text on some of the slides. Marks were not awarded where incorrect software had been used such as the RTF file opened, manipulated and printed in word processing software.

Question 24

Creating a master slide to display the required features in the same position on every slide proved challenging for some candidates. Most entered their name, centre number and candidate number in the top left as instructed although a small number of candidates only included their name, omitting their centre and/or candidate number. Most attempted to draw the vertical and horizontal lines as shown on the question paper with varying degrees of success. The lines were not always straight or were not positioned a consistent distance (about 2 centimetres) from the edge of the slide. The line widths were not always changed from the default width to 3 to 4 points thick and occasionally the drawn lines did not fill the full width and/or height of the slide. The text on the slides sometimes overlapped the vertical line. Candidates who drew both lines were usually able to position the slide numbers correctly on the top right in the box where the lines intersected. Occasionally one or more of the master slide items changed position on the second and/or subsequent slides.

Question 25

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates with screenshot evidence to show the slide was hidden.

Question 26

Most candidates opened the correct source file and used this data to create a pie chart. Some were unable to demonstrate the ability to select non-contiguous data and as a result included all the data in their selection instead of displaying the macronutrients for endurance training only. A number of candidates included the total row in their selection.

Question 27

The chart title was usually entered in the correct position but occasionally contained data entry or capitalisation errors. Common errors included '*Macronutrient'* keyed as '*Micronutrient'* or '*Macronutrients'*. The title was not always displayed as shown with some entering the text in uppercase or with each word capitalised.

Question 28

Controlling the display of the sector labels was not always well done. A number included the values as well as or instead of the micronutrient names and percentages. The sector labels were not always displayed outside each chart sector as the software default had not been changed. A legend was often displayed when the chart data selection was incorrect.

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Question 29

A number of candidates did not attempt to enhance the chart display by pulling out the sector with the largest percentage. Occasionally the chart was exploded so all the sectors were pulled away instead of just the single sector.

Question 30

Most candidates placed the chart to the left of the bullets on the correct slide. Occasionally this was incorrectly placed to the right or above/below the bulleted text. Not all candidates resized the data label shapes so the words were not split, most commonly seen on '*Carbohydrate'*. The chart was usually positioned so it did not overlap any slide items.

Question 31

Some candidates find the creation of presenter notes challenging. Some incorrectly entered the text as a bulleted item on the slide, inserted the text as a comment or used a text box to place the text on the slide. Occasionally the text was entered in the header/footer area. Where the text was entered as presenter/speaker notes it occasionally contained data entry and/or capitalisation errors and some candidates incorrectly inserted a full stop at the end of the text. Few candidates printed in presenter/speaker notes layout with many printing a single full-page slide.

Question 32

Most candidates were able to demonstrate the skill of creating a text hyperlink. The most common issue was applying the link to the text '*critical fuel*' instead of '*critical fuel source*'. Others applied the link to the slide title '*Optimise your diet*' or to one of the placeholders on the slide. A small number of candidates did not locate the text and apply the link to that source text as instructed but entered new text on the slide in order to create the link. Most candidates linked the text to the correct slide in the presentation. A number of candidates did not produce adequate screenshot evidence to demonstrate the link with some only providing a screenshot of the text on the slide underlined with no evidence of the hyperlink on the text.

Question 33

Most candidates printed in portrait orientation with two slides to the page, each filling half the page. However, controlling the print so the hidden slide was not printed was not so well done with a number of candidates printing all the slides in the presentation or deleting the hidden slide, so the last slide became slide 6 instead of slide 7. Some candidates printed all the slides as single full-page slides.

Task 5 – *Printing the Evidence Document*

Question 34

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 0983/03
Practical Test

Key messages

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

- Candidates need to understand the importance of following the instructions on the question paper.
- Candidates must ensure that they type their candidate details in to each piece of work. Candidates must enter their name, centre number and candidate number on every printout before it is sent to the printer, as stated on the front of the question paper.
- Candidates need to ensure that all spreadsheet column widths are wide enough to display the data/formulas whilst using a font size large enough to enable examiners to read the work, without the use of magnification devices.
- Candidates need to ensure that screenshots of their CSS are in a font size large enough to enable examiners to read the work, without the use of magnification devices.
- Candidates need to be able to identify which spreadsheet function is the most appropriate for a task.
- Candidates need to take greater care with the accuracy of data entry.
- Candidates need a better understanding of the syntax of both CSS and HTML and apply each appropriately, particularly the appropriate use of head and body tags and also ensuring that external cascading stylesheets do not contain any html.

General comments

There were significant differences in the range of results from centre to centre and from candidate to candidate within centres. The paper contained many elements from the syllabus not assessed in recent years so proved more challenging to many candidates. The paper gave a good spread of marks.

There has been a significant increase in the number of candidates not typing their candidate details in to their work, and we would like to remind candidates and centres that candidates must enter their name, centre number and candidate number on every printout before it is sent to the printer, as stated on the front of the question paper.

Candidates **must** ensure that the text within the markup, stylesheet and spreadsheet printouts is fully visible and large enough to enable examiners to read the work, without the use of magnification devices.

Comments on specific questions

Task 1 – Evidence Document

Almost all candidates created an Evidence Document.

Task 2 – Spreadsheet

Question 1

The supplied file was used by most candidates. Most candidates placed their name, centre number and candidate number right aligned in the header.

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Question 2

This was performed well by almost all candidates. Most candidates copied and pasted this data into the correct cells, although responses were seen that placed this range of cells in the wrong rows. Occasionally the data was changed despite a clear instruction that stated 'Do not change this data.'

Question 3

Most candidates successfully used the arithmetic operator (/) to divide the contents of cell B5 by 1000. The most commonly seen error was for candidates to use =450/1000 which was using the value from cell B5 and embedding it into their formula.

Question 4

The question was designed to test the candidates' use of indices, brackets and the order of mathematical operations. Many candidates completed this question with 100% accuracy often with a formula like =B6+SQRT((B7/2)^2+B8^2). A significant number of candidates found the indices part of the question challenging and many responses such as =B6+SQRT((B7/2)*2+B8*2) were seen.

Question 5

Many candidates found this question challenging. After studying the spreadsheet, candidates were expected to identify that cell B9 contained the length of the rafter and use a suitable look up function.

Question 6

This question elicited a mixed response from candidates. The question was explicit and instructed candidates to use a validation rule to restrict the data entry. Where candidates attempted this, most used the select from list function and either entered the range B21:E21 (which was the expected response) or in some cases, added a copy of the data from this range into the list box of the validation rule. Almost all candidates who attempted this question selected the tick box for the 'in-cell dropdown' to get the drop-down list.

Question 7

Many candidates found this question challenging and it was used to differentiate between the higher level and other candidates. The question was explicit in that it required candidates to 'look up' the cost which restricted the expected candidate responses to the use of two different lookup functions. A significant number of candidates attempted to use nested IF functions or the IFS function which did not meet the requirements of this question. Of those candidates who attempted this question using a look up function many correctly identified the outer look up as a VLOOKUP (or XLOOKUP) function but fewer then included a HLOOKUP (or XLOOKUP) to look up from the (horizontal) range B21 to E22. A variety of correct responses were seen including: =VLOOKUP(B10,A24:E36,HLOOKUP(B11,B21:E22,2,0)+1,0) and =XLOOKUP(B10,A24:A36,XLOOKUP(B11,B21:E21,B24:E36,,1)).

Question 8

Many candidates completed this question with 100 per cent accuracy and attained all four marks, although some did not reduce the height of rows 2 and 4 as shown in the diagram on the question paper. Most candidates merged the required cells. Where candidates did not centre rows 1 and 3, it was not possible to verify that the cells were merged.

Question 9

Many candidates produced a formula printout in landscape orientation with the cell contents fully visible. Not all of these displayed the row and column headings. A significant number of candidates did not display all column widths so that the contents of all the data and formulas could be seen. Where a full formula could not be seen candidates did not achieve potential marks. Where row and column headings had not been displayed it was not possible to identify that rows 2 and 4 had been narrowed or to confirm that the contents of file n25stock.csv had been placed in the correct cells in the spreadsheet.

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Question 10

The printout of the values spreadsheet was completed well by many candidates. Most candidates printed in portrait orientation on a single page. Some candidates printed row and column headings when instructed not to do so in the question paper. Not all cells were fully visible in some printouts.

Question 11

The printout of the values spreadsheet used for modelling was completed well by many candidates. Most candidates entered the three numerical values with 100 per cent accuracy, but fewer candidates selected the 175 × 50 timber size as well. Most printed in portrait orientation on a single page but not all candidates restricted the print area to only cells in the range A1 to B12. Some candidates printed row and column headings when instructed not to do so in the question paper.

Task 3– File management

Question 12

Many candidates completed this question as required. A significant number of candidates did not include the folder name **TC** in their printout, often because they had 'over-cropped' the screenshot. Other candidates did not include the image dimensions in their printout. Where the folder name was visible, there were a small number of case errors in the folder name entered by the candidates. Most candidates placed the correct five files in this folder.

Task 4 – Web page

Question 13

Many candidates created the required new external stylesheet and named it as specified in the question paper. Some candidates incorrectly attempted to append their styles to the end of the stylesheet supplied with the source files. A significant number ignored the instruction that their stylesheet 'must not contain HTML or scripting language.' Stylesheets that contained HTML could not be external cascading stylesheets. Many candidates successfully set the four attributes and values required for the body selector. A small number had errors in the order of the red, green and blue components of the background-color attribute. Some errors were seen with the inclusion of a file path in the @URL values for the background-image attribute.

Where the table styles were set some candidates did not demonstrate an understanding of which attributes should be placed in the table selector and which in the table data (td) selector. For this question the border attributes and table alignment should have been placed in the table selector and the padding attribute should have been placed in the table data selector.

Candidates were not always aware of the difference between styles and classes. Some attempted this question using all styles and some using all classes. This may be due to the use of WYSIWYG packages. Where these are used candidates should be able to go into the CSS to amend the styles and classes if the package generates it incorrectly (which they frequently do) for the specific question asked on the question paper. Few candidates used .centre as the class selector, some omitting the dot, others setting .center and some setting the class as .class. Many candidates added their name and candidate details to the end of the stylesheet but fewer of them set this as a CSS comment.

This was frequently saved as specified although a small number of candidates used incorrect case in their file names. The screenshot was usually taken of the correct stylesheet, it was sometimes over-cropped so that the file name was not visible. A large number of candidates placed the screenshot on their page so that it was so small that it was not possible to read the text, even with the aid of magnification devices.

Question 14

The web page was not always edited as specified in the question paper. Not all candidates set the rowspans to 4 and 2 in order to obtain the structure matching the diagram in the question paper. Most candidates removed the borders and gridlines from their table structures.

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Question 15

Most candidates attached the stylesheet n25tc1.css to the web page; a small number did not place it in the head section. Fewer candidates attached their stylesheet saved in step 13 to the web page so that it had higher priority (was below) the original supplied stylesheet. Some candidates erroneously used a file path within the hyperlink reference of one or both stylesheets, which would work on the file structure of their computer, but would not work when the web page was uploaded to a web server.

Question 16

Many candidates completed this step as instructed, although some did not place the title in the head section. A number of typographical errors were seen in the title text, particularly related to initial capitalisation. A small number of candidates left the webpage title as their WYSIWYG packages default 'untitled'.

Question 17

Most candidates who attempted to use the mailto: value for their hyperlink reference selected the text 'Contact us' to set their anchor tags around. Many candidates used the correct syntax for the mailto and subject values within this hyperlink, but a number of typographical errors were seen in either the email address or the text in the subject line 'Quote requested', the most frequent error was the mis-spelling of Quote.

Question 18

A significant number of candidates did not replace the given text 'A Candidate' but appended their name and candidate details to the end of this text. Their candidate details were not always placed on a new line using another <h3> tag or a <br> tag. Few candidates correctly applied the class .centre to both lines of text in this table cell.

Question 19

Few candidates successfully added the default target attribute to the window to open in _self. This was sometimes located in the <body> section of the web page, rather than in the <head> section where it was expected.

Question 20

Many candidates found this question challenging and the appropriate attributes and values for the meta tag were rarely seen. Meta tags were sometimes generated by WYSIWYG packages in the <head> section but rarely contained the name attribute set to author or the content attribute set to the candidate's name.

Question 21

Many candidates submitted their HTML, although some candidates omitted this stage. A number of candidates produced screenshots from their WYSIWYG HTML editor which were often not large enough to enable examiners to read the work, without the use of magnification devices. A number of candidates did not produce a browser view but again produced screenshots from their WYSIWYG editor which did not allow examiners to see that images were displayed in the correct cells in a web browser. Despite clear instructions in the question paper about the requirements for the browser view not all candidates showed the full page, often cropping it to remove the address bar.

Task 5 – Printing the Evidence Document

This was printed as specified by almost all candidates.

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