

## Principal Moderator's Report

While the trend of improved marking from most centres remains a feature of this year's entry there are still a few issues worthy of note, particularly as several centres have entered candidates for the first time this year.

- All work submitted as samples for moderation should be in rank order according to the total mark for each candidate and not according to candidate examination number.
- Work should not be sent in polypockets, as this slows down the moderation process considerably.
- Teacher annotation was greatly improved this year and this helped moderators identify when and where marks were allocated by teachers, especially for advanced features which were not always obvious on hardcopy. Please remember that if features and effects are not clearly identified then moderators may well adjust the marks accordingly. This can obviously result in candidates achieving lower marks than they deserve.
- Pupil annotation was well done by some centres but by no means them all. For assignments such as A1 (Multimedia) it is very useful for candidates to use the 'notes' or 'handout' facility to ensure that features used, such as animation, are clearly identified.
- Very few centres are now insisting that all candidates use one topic or idea for an assignment. This is an improvement allowing individual expression and is to be encouraged.
- Teachers need to be careful about being over-prescriptive or using templates inappropriately as this makes it difficult to extract the individual contribution on some pieces of work.
- Assignments A1–A3 reports must have evidence of how the presentations, booklets and websites were constructed. Too many centres only described what was used instead of describing "how to do." I suggest that this can be in the form of textual description, screen dumps or a combination of the two.

The following points relate to each assignment set this year:-

### A1

- Some centres marked on the assumption that Custom Animation was enough to warrant full marks for Special Effects. Candidates must have a selection of effects which will enhance the presentation. Examples of these can be found in The Specification.
- When candidates use graphics, which must be from at least two different sources, they should clearly identify the source of the graphics.

### A2

There appears to be some confusion about what constitutes Advance Features in this assignment. Basically we are looking for the use of word processing features which have not

been identified in the Mark Scheme eg borders, alignment, enhanced text (using Styles or colour for a purpose), multiple-columns etc.

### A3

- Screen dumps or hardcopy in monochrome need further explanation if colour has been used in the original construction of a website.
- It appears that many centres are finding it increasingly more difficult to produce good quality websites using programs such as Word and Publisher. Perhaps it is time to investigate web-authoring packages such as those found on the C2K system.

### B1

- Surprisingly some centres sent in this assignment when the candidates had only investigated the use of one search engine. The specification clearly states that at least two engines must be used.
- Candidates must select a topic or subject related to school. It is not acceptable to state that a topic has been selected 'because I like it'. The **full** marks for this assignment will be deducted if the topic is not justified as a school subject or topic.
- Evaluating the websites does not mean evaluating the search engines. Candidates must evaluate the sites related to the topic they searched for. Candidates should also be encouraged to develop their evaluations beyond a simple scale of 1 to 10. It would be better practice to include more descriptive details.
- Please remember that **evidence** of sending an attachment via e-mail is required.
- Downloading and integrating information has caused some concern among centres and candidates. The candidate should visit some of the websites they found relevant to their search criteria. They are then expected to extract some of the information from the different sites, 'paste' them together to make one coherent document - thus discriminating which information is useful and which should be ignored.

### B2

- There is no requirement to produce a report on how results were achieved. If centres wish to do this they will not be penalised.
- Candidates must produce all data for tasks set. When asked to produce receipts and merged letters they must print them all. Some printed one receipt or letter and expected to be awarded full marks.
- The sorting task requires sorting on two fields to achieve marks for this.

### **B3**

- While this assignment was generally well treated there were some weaknesses identified. The reports tended to be very brief and some did not include a summary of results eg which company offered the best deal.
- More care needs to be taken with spreadsheet design. This aspect needs to be described or at least hand-drawn to supply evidence of proper planning.

On a final note please be careful about candidate entries. The full GCSE course is to be treated as a different subject to the short course ICT. Centres cannot change candidates from one to the other without going through the process of transferring subjects via their Examinations Officer, who in turn will contact CCEA and complete all necessary paperwork.

Thank you all for your co-operation this year and I hope we have another successful year in front of us.