



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
In Information Technology Unit4 (WIT14)Paper 01

WIT14 Examiner's Report

Report is split into two sections: General Comments and Specific Comments. In the Specific Comments, there will be comments about the candidates' responses to the written and coding questions.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The format of the question paper is a combination of written questions and practical database tasks. It is intended that the structure of the paper is such that demand increases through each question and through the paper as a whole. There are two extended written questions to answer with the rest being practical database activities evidenced through screenprints.

The only document that needs to be submitted for marking is the completed candidate evidence template, which has been saved using this format:

Centre Number_Candidate_Number_Candidate Surname

For example 12345_0001_Meek

A number of candidates did not ensure their screenprints could be read even when examiners had zoomed in as far as they possibly could. Others truncated criteria in queries etc. Both affect the marks that can be awarded.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Written response questions

Question 1

- Q01ai This was quite well answered with the majority of candidates achieving at least 1 mark. Where 2 marks were not achieved it was usually because the candidates had failed to force to uppercase or because they did not consider the format of the postcode specified in the question.
- Q01aii This was quite well answered with the majority of candidates achieving at least 1 mark. Where 2 marks were not achieved it was usually because the candidates had set the Required property to Yes rather than using a validation rule such as Is Not Null along with a suitable error message that the user would see. Those who set Required to Yes and also specified an error message in the validation text property did not achieve the second mark unless they had also set the validation rule as described.
- Q01aiii The majority of candidates recognised that the StartDate should have been Date/Time and amended it.

Q01b

It was nice to see the number of candidates who had made sure the form would be easy to use. However, there are a number who still simply rely on the default form created by the wizard. In terms of the format and layout of the interface this will not attract many marks. It was expected that candidates would have ensured:

- generated fields were disabled
- field labels were appropriate and consistent (spaces between words, consistent use of case)
- the form had a meaningful title from which the user could clearly see its purpose
- the field widths were considered - not too wide for the data they would hold
- there would be instructions telling the user how to use the form
- asterisks would be present on all fields that required the input of data
- there would be a combo box for the staff type – with evidence of the source of the combo box
- there would be a save button, clearly labelled as such.

There was a number of candidates who did not achieve the mark for at least one of the two generated fields being disabled and the ease-of-use mark as the form did not include at least three of the above.

Automation in this paper included:

- opening the form ready for data entry
- generating the StaffID as one number higher than the number currently used
- setting the start date to today's date
- saving the record in the table
- displaying a message to say that the record had been saved.

Opening the form ready for data entry

Some candidates had set the Data Entry property of the form to Yes to achieve this, others had used a macro or code to go to a new record, others used an unbound form. Any method that showed the form would be clear and ready for data input was acceptable.

Generating the StaffID

Candidates who changed the data type to Autonumber did not achieve the mark for this. It was expected that some form of a formula or equivalent would be used. Those who achieved the mark tended to use a DMax formula. In terms of work required those who used DMax/Max in the default property of the field did not need to add further steps in the save process to ensure the value would be saved. Those who used an unbound form would be expected to have the design view of an append query (or equivalent) and to see that query being run in the macro or code.

Default values

Many used the default property of the start date field to set the default value to today's date. This was good as it meant that these values would be appended to the table as part of the save process. However, some entered =Date() or equivalent in the control source of the field meaning it was no longer bound to the staff table and would no longer be saved. This affected the save process evidence required.

Save process

There were many different methods seen. Whether the form was bound or unbound was significant in determining whether the method given was markworthy.

If the form was unbound, then simply using the command to save the record was not enough evidence. The candidates would have needed further evidence e.g., an append query shown in design view and running the query in their macro or equivalent.

Where individual fields were unbound e.g. using formulae as the control source, if the save command alone was used this was not enough evidence to suggest the values of these fields would be saved in the table.

Overall, many achieved the marks for:

- opening the form at a new record
- having a save button present
- generating the StaffID
- setting the start date to today's date
- having a save method
- displaying a save message

Very few achieved the mark for the save message displaying only if the record had been saved i.e. only if it should. If the save message appears regardless of whether a record has been saved or not, then it is not user friendly. Trapping invalid data should have prevented this.

Q01c Many candidates achieved the full 11 marks for their database structure with very clear screenprint evidence.

The majority of candidate has appropriately used tbl in some format as part of the name for each table and most had used a consistent format for field names e.g., camel case, _ or space between words.

The majority of candidates recognised the need for a job and school table. Fewer recognised the need for a performance table, or they had recognised this but not the fields that should be in it. Others included some form of a

link table that was clearly not a performance table and meant the staff table no longer related directly to any other table.

Relationships needed to have referential integrity enforced in order to achieve marks. The majority of candidates ensured they had done this.

The majority of candidates achieved the marks for an appropriate primary key for the job and school tables. Few of those who had recognised the need for a performance table correctly identified and used StaffID and the meeting date as the key.

There were very few candidates who did not achieve the mark for using the correct data types.

Q01d A good number of candidates achieved all three marks. However, there marks were affected where candidates did not include the performance table.

Also, a number of candidates did not ensure the number of records could be seen. They were asked to take a screenprint of the first five records including the number of records.

Q01e The full range of marks seen for this question. There were some excellent detailed responses where all of the issues had been found and sensible recommendations made. However a number of learners gave a very general response where it was hard to determine the fields they were talking about etc. Very few noticed that the years service field would become outdated and should not have been stored at all as it could be generated.

Question 2

Q02a This question was well answered with many candidates achieving all of the marks. However, there were some candidates who had not used criteria or had truncated the criteria.

There were also a number of candidates who did not take the full question into account i.e. Southview Secondary School only and the year 2022.

Q02bi A good number of candidates also achieved full marks in the questions. However, again, aspects of the question were missed at times e.g. only performance grades for assistants. At times where the highest and lowest grades had been successfully generated, candidates did not consider that the best grade that could be achieved was 1 and the lowest 3 – labelling the maximum as being the best grade and minimum as the worst grade. This affected the marks achieved.

Q02bii There was evidence seen across a wide range of the marks with a number of candidates achieving all 8 marks.

- Including the title in the page or report header and ensuring it was as given were common marks achieved.
- Grouping was successfully achieved in most responses.
- The problems with not taking the scenario into account in terms of the best grade per school affected the marks awarded at times
- Formatting marks were less frequently awarded i.e. shading, centre alignment etc

Question 3

Q03a Very few candidates included fields that were not required, which was good. Most calculated the number of staff. Fewer used the correct criteria (≥ 6 , > 5) and ensured the generated field had a suitable field name. On the whole though it was really well answered with many candidates achieving full marks.

Q03b Most candidates achieved the marks for creating a chart, using a meaningful chart title, ensuring the axis showed item names (bar chart) or the legend used the item names (pie chart) and using a suitable scale.

However, a number of candidates did not ensure there was at least one suitable axis label which made it hard to judge if the chart was fit for purpose.

Question 4

Surprisingly some candidates still label the buttons inappropriately e.g. query 2(a), form, query, report etc. The labels have to be detailed enough that an end user would know their purpose. Most candidates achieved the marks for opening the data entry form and the query. Fewer achieved the marks that required a choice from the user. It needed to be a single button that triggered the actions and, if the choice was to view the report, then it needed to open in Print Preview mode, if the choice was not to view the report, then there should have been a message to say the operation was cancelled.

Question 5

The full range of marks were used. However, some candidates did not provide a response that actually answered the question – they evaluated Figure 2 itself rather than focus on how the structure of the database could be modified to allow the data shown to be recorded/generated. This impacted the marks that could be awarded. Of those who answered the question with the focus intended there were some excellent responses that were well worthy of full marks.