

**Performance Descriptions for
Foundation, Advanced and Higher
Principal Learning Qualifications in
Information Technology**

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July 2011

Ofqual/11/4904

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Phase 1 Lines of Learning

Performance descriptions are statements that describe typical performance of candidates at the top and bottom of an acceptable range. They relate to whole principal learning qualifications rather than specific units.

Their purpose is to:

- help awarding organisations in designing mark band statements that reflect agreed standards, thus helping to ensure parity across awarding organisations;
- help awarding organisations in designing principal learning qualifications that are pitched at the right level;
- contribute towards contextualising the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) level descriptions for specific lines of learning.

The performance descriptions describe two levels of performance:

Pass

At the bottom of the acceptable range, this is the minimal level of performance for a learner to pass a principal learning qualification.

Top

At the top of the acceptable range, this is what can reasonably be expected of a high-attaining learner who has followed an appropriate course.

Performance descriptions are not competency definitions and need to have sufficient latitude to allow for 'best fit' marking grids to be written.

Performance descriptions have been written by awarding organisations and Diploma Development Partnerships against the relevant lines of learning criteria.

Performance descriptions are not intended to summarise the content of lines of learning topics. Awarding organisations are required to ensure that full topic content is accurately reflected in specifications.

Specifications are issued as they stand so that awarding organisations can begin using them as soon as possible to develop their principal learning qualifications.

Please note: the numerical references used for performance descriptions do not bear any relationship to those used for lines of learning criteria or those which may be used in subsequent qualifications.

Level 1 Grade B

Candidates characteristically:

- demonstrate basic knowledge from some areas of the specification
- demonstrate a basic understanding of some aspects of digital technology through simple practical investigation of routine technology contexts
- describe some basic ways in which technology helps organisations and individuals to achieve some of their objectives
- produce basic designs and carry out a test of a simple technology system to meet a routine, limited pre-defined business need
- apply, with direction, some basic principles of problem solving for a routine situation in a technical environment
- carry out some limited communication within a business context using basic written and spoken English
- require support and guidance to carry out straightforward tasks and procedures.

Level 1 Grade A*

Candidates characteristically:

- demonstrate basic knowledge from most areas of the specification
- demonstrate basic understanding of digital technology through simple investigations and application of appropriate knowledge in well-defined and routine and non-routine contexts
- describe different ways in which technology helps organisations and individuals to achieve their objectives
- produce simple designs, create and carry out appropriate tests of a simple technology system to meet a defined business need
- apply some principles of problem solving in a technical environment

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- carry out effective communication within a business context using basic written and spoken English
- show some independence in carrying out straightforward tasks and procedures.

Level 2 Grade C

Candidates characteristically:

- select and use knowledge from some areas of the specification
- demonstrate understanding of some key principles and processes through practical investigation and application of knowledge in routine information technology contexts
- demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of typical organisations and common business processes
- carry out a basic investigation and provide a simple description of how technology is transforming organisations
- design and develop basic technology-enabled solutions to meet a straightforward business need
- apply some problem-solving techniques to some routine problems arising in technology systems
- design and develop a simple multimedia product demonstrating basic understanding of business requirements, technical competence and a consideration of audience needs
- create straightforward outline task-based project plans
- communicate and conduct themselves appropriately in a business context
- communicate appropriately using straightforward English and basic mathematics in a business context
- show independence in carrying out familiar tasks and procedures, but need support and guidance in less familiar activities.

Level 2 Grade A*

Candidates characteristically:

- select and use detailed knowledge accurately from most areas of the specification
- demonstrate understanding of technology principles through practical investigation and appropriate application of knowledge to problems in routine and non-routine technology-related situations

- carry out a detailed investigation of how technology is transforming organisations
- demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of a range of organisations and business processes
- design and develop advanced technology-enabled solutions to meet a business need
- apply problem-solving techniques confidently to solve a range of problems arising in technology systems
- design and develop a multimedia product that demonstrates a clear understanding of business requirements, sound technical competence and a clear sense of audience needs
- create detailed task-based project plans
- communicate and conduct themselves effectively, and show an appreciation of the consequences of different behaviours in a business context
- demonstrate effective use of English and mathematics in a business context
- show independence in carrying out a range of tasks and procedures, and seek support and guidance where needed.

Level 3 Grade E

Candidates characteristically:

- apply detailed knowledge relevantly and with some accuracy for most areas of the specification
- apply some theoretical understanding through practical investigations and application of knowledge to a variety of routine and non-routine technology-related situations
- investigate and critically assess the contribution of technology to current global business environments
- identify and describe differences in companies' organisational structures and styles, with reference to the impact of technology
- develop and assess quality project plans relevant to realistic work environments
- demonstrate a sound grasp of technology fundamentals in designing, developing, testing and implementing technology-enabled solutions that deliver identified business benefits
- develop creative and appropriate multimedia solutions demonstrating an understanding of business requirements, technical competence and awareness of audience needs
- demonstrate the ability to manage small-scale live technology system operations to meet a customer's business requirements, including systems availability, technical problem solving and change management
- demonstrate appropriate interpersonal skills, including some elements of team working, critical analysis, problem solving, self-management, creative thinking and reflective learning
- communicate and operate effectively and appropriately in a variety of different business contexts, using English and mathematics to the level required in the professional workplace
- are able to take a proactive approach to seeking guidance, requiring little or no supervision to carry on and complete straightforward tasks and problems.

Level 3 Grade A*

Candidates characteristically:

- apply detailed knowledge relevantly and accurately for most areas of the specification
- apply theoretical understanding to investigate and solve a variety of problems in a broad range, including complex, technology-related situations
- carry out a thorough and systematic assessment of the contribution of technology in the current global business environment
- evaluate differences in the impact of technology on the organisational structure and management styles
- develop detailed project plans relevant to realistic work environments, identifying and assessing key factors in the success or failure of projects
- demonstrate a comprehensive grasp of technology fundamentals in designing, developing, testing and implementing complex technology-enabled solutions that deliver identified business benefits
- develop effective and creative multimedia solutions demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of business requirements, technical competence and sensitivity to audience needs
- demonstrate high-level of ability to manage small-scale live technology system operations to meet a customer's business requirements, including systems availability, technical problem solving and change management
- demonstrate appropriate and effective interpersonal skills in a range of situations, including team working, critical analysis, problem solving, self-management, creative thinking and reflective learning
- communicate and operate effectively and appropriately in complex business contexts, interpreting and evaluating ideas and relevant information using English and mathematics to the level required in the professional workplace
- independently complete complex tasks and problems to a high standard taking, when needed, a proactive approach to seeking support and guidance.

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First published by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation in 2011

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