Working it out – Written answers

Introduction

The structure of each question paper may vary, but these examples are typical of the activities that learners are expected to complete.

The examples of learner work are based on one of NCFE's retired papers. Additional notes are included to give guidance when working with other assessment papers as tasks and mark allocations will vary. The notes are intended to inform the preparation for all papers, and are therefore not only related to one specific paper.

The comments on the responses are intended to support improved preparation for the assessment, through encouraging an understanding of the skills required. The information provided is not intended to indicate what is a perfect, model answer as the activities can often be approached in different ways and with outcomes that look a little different. More important is that learners demonstrate the appropriate range of skills using ICT tools and features in the applications they have chosen to use.

Levels of response

The sample responses show a high level of performance, with a high or full mark likely.

Scenario:

The manager of a local technology store, Mr White, has asked you to help with some IT tasks. He wants you to help him produce a newsletter. You will need to work on sales data and produce the newsletter article.

Question 5:   Answer written questions.

Enter answers to the following questions.
Marks available: 4

Question a: I have quite a large monitor for my PC, but the text and icons all look very large. How can I change this?

Marks available: 2

Learner response

> **Your answer:**
>
> You should change the screen resolution.
>
> You can do this right clicking on the desktop and selecting Display Settings, or choose Start and Control Panel and then Appearance and Personalisation.

Examiner comment:

Marks available: 2	Marks awarded: 2
Reasons:	
The learner correctly identifies that this relates to screen resolution for 1 mark. The learner then clearly explains two alternative methods to adjust the screen resolution. Either method alone will be sufficient for the second mark.	
Marks are often lost when learners give partial answers, and therefore learners should review their response to make sure it is clear.	

Question b: You used an application for your work in Question 2. Explain what features and tools made the application suitable for the work.

Marks available: 2

Learner response

Your answer:
The application can use a formula to calculate. The formula can be quickly copied to other cells.   Using a formula means that if a number changes, the calculation is done again automatically.   Charts can be made to show the data more clearly.

Examiner comment:

Marks available: 2	Marks awarded: 2
Reasons:	
The learner identifies the use of a formula to calculate. They justify this with an explanation of the benefit, and give two examples with the reference to copying of a formula (replication) and automatic re-calculation. One explanation would have been sufficient for the mark. The learner also mentions charts as a means of displaying data clearly, for the second mark. The learner could also have mentioned the use of text and number formats, or sorting and filtering. With any answer, some explanation is expected as indicated by the question text and this can be effectively provided with the use of an example of how the learner might use that particular facility. In a question such as this, marks will be lost if a learner does not 'explain' and only lists features of the application. Explanation and examples help to show genuine understanding.	

Examiner tip:

Security and safety: Learners need to have a broad knowledge of issues regarding personal safety online and the protection of data from risks presented by viruses etc. Wider reading or the use of quiz-type material in lessons would benefit learners.