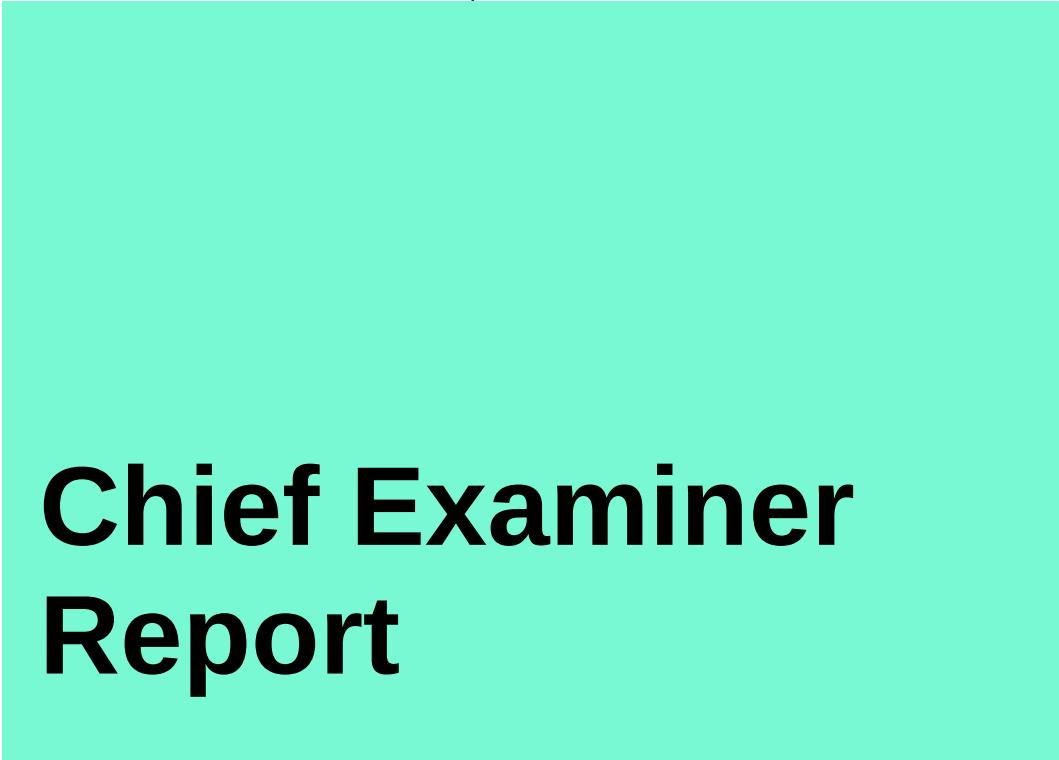




Chief Examiner Report

**T Level Technical Qualification
in Digital Business Services
(603/6902/4)**

**Summer 2025 – occupational
specialism (OS) Data Technician**

Introduction

Summer 2025 – occupational specialism (OS) Data Technician

Assessment dates: **28 April 2025 to 15 May 2025**

Paper numbers: **P002632, P002633, P002634 and P002635**

This report contains information in relation to the externally assessed component provided by the chief examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of student work within this assessment.

The report is written for providers, with the aim of highlighting how students have performed generally, as well as any areas where further development or guidance may be required to support preparation for future opportunities.

Key points:

- grade boundaries
- standard of student work
- evidence creation
- responses to the external assessment tasks
- administering the external assessment.

It is important to note that students should not sit this external assessment until they have received the relevant teaching of the qualification in relation to this component.

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for the series are:

	Overall
Max	213
Distinction	168
Merit	126
Pass	84

Grade boundaries are the lowest mark with which a grade is achieved.

For further detail on how raw marks are scaled and the aggregation of the OS element, please refer to the Qualification Specification.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment](#) document. Students may require additional pre-release material to complete the tasks. These must be provided to students in line with our regulations.

Students must be given the resources to carry out the tasks and these are highlighted within the [Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery](#) (QSID) document.

Standard of student work

Overall, student performance in the summer 2025 assessment series was broadly in line with outcomes from previous years. The paper maintained a similar level of demand, and students generally engaged well with all tasks presented.

Performance across the cohort reflected a wide spectrum of achievement. There was a clear difference between students who could accurately follow procedural instructions and those able to apply higher-order critical thinking skills to interpret, adapt, and extend their responses.

Many students found it challenging to link their work to the context of the task. While they could carry out technical steps, such as cleaning data or creating charts, they often struggled to explain why these actions were needed in relation to the business objectives in the brief. This was especially noticeable in written logs which required justification, where answers often described what was done and how, but gave little detail about the reasons behind their choices.

This means that tasks requiring higher-order cognitive skills proved the most challenging for many students. In contrast, activities involving data filtering and validation were handled well by the majority of the cohort. Notably, performance on the dashboard creation task showed a marked improvement compared with previous series. This year, a greater proportion of students demonstrated more sophisticated use of visualisation tools, with a stronger understanding of user requirements, resulting in outputs that were both technically proficient and contextually relevant.

At distinction level, evidence was well-structured, professionally presented, and easy to navigate. Decision logs were detailed and comprehensive, while final outputs, such as dashboards or presentations, looked professional and of a high standard.

At pass level, evidence generally met the core requirements of the brief but lacked professional refinement. Common issues included inconsistent document formatting, spreadsheets that were difficult to interpret due to poor structure, and decision logs that were brief and provided limited justification for the actions taken.

Evidence creation

There was a range of evidence presented once again this year across the four assignments for this OS. This included completed written proposals, decision log, joined dataset, dashboard and presentation.

There was a wide variety in the quality of the evidence, particularly the joined dataset and the functionality of the dashboard. In comparison to previous sessions, there has been an improvement, but students would benefit from a greater understanding of choosing data that meets business aims and objectives, and techniques to prepare this in a way the business can best use this.

The students showed a marked improvement this year in the organisation and submission of their evidence making the marking process more efficient.

Responses to the external assessment tasks

Task 1

This task comprised of three parts. For part A, students were required to research and write a proposal that met the aims and objectives of a solar power client. For part B, students needed to select the most appropriate datasets from the ones provided and then discuss why these were chosen and how they

could be used. For part C, students were required to explain key principles of data security and the measures they would implement when handling the data they have selected.

Part A

Overall, this was well performed this series. Students typically used the guidance in the brief as a basis for their research and identified a good range of sources that provided useful data in relation to types of solar panels, homes in the UK with solar panels, and UK demographics that supported the use of solar panels. This was used as a basis for their proposal, with graphs included and then discussed.

Higher performing students were able to identify a wide range of data that help them to identify the popularity of solar panels, where these would be fitted and locations that are more popular. This provided them with plenty of data, from very reliable sources, that allowed them to demonstrate how they would produce a proposal that would help a business to meet their aims and objectives.

Students that didn't perform as well identified a limited range of data sources, typically two or three, that just provided a more simplistic suggestion of how this data would support the business aims and objectives. There were also instances where additional points were discussed that didn't have any data available to support the claims being made.

To achieve well in this task, students need to identify a wider range of suitable data and understand how this can be used to support business aims and objectives. They need to be able to source reliable and valid data based on set requirements and then explain in detail what that data means and how it would help a business to meet its key aims.

Part B

Overall, this was reasonably well performed this series. Students typically identified a range of datasets that could be used by the business and provided some justification for their choices.

Higher performing students were able to analyse each dataset provided and clearly identify which they would use and why they have chosen to use this. Each dataset was discussed in detail picking out examples from the data, such as the customer sales not containing personal details like card details and addresses, as this helped to show the popularity of models. Also identifying if the dataset needed cleansing and what would be required. There were also justifications for the datasets that were not selected, which helped to understand their thought process.

Students that didn't perform as well typically selected a smaller range of datasets and only provided a brief justification for their choice with limited detail of how this could be used. In these instances, some of the more useful datasets were missed and there was no discussion regarding why these had not been selected, which the brief does ask for.

To achieve well in this task, all datasets should be considered. If a student decides some are not required, then there should be some reasoning for this, as it would allow the examiner to see why they have decided to not include a particular dataset, which may allow additional marks to be awarded. Also, for datasets selected, there should be a clear rationale for the choice explaining how this would help the business to meet its goals and how it would be used.

Part C

Overall, this was performed well by higher performing students. These students looked at UK GDPR and data protection in relation to the specific data Green Living Data Ltd would be working with. Key principles were explored and discussed in detail, again with some contextualisation to the scenario.

Security measures were also discussed and, although generic in places, it was clear that this related back to the company.

Students that didn't perform as well typically missed the point of the task and just tended to provide a more generic overview of what a business may do. There was very little, or sometimes no reference, to legislation. In other instances, legislation was mentioned, but security measures were not discussed. This was also usually very generic and very limited in reference to the business.

To achieve well in this task, students need to be able to clearly explain the key principles of data security and measures they would put in place. They should consider the type of data the business will be working with and use this as a basis for the proposal. The students should consider the data they have been provided with as they may be able to then reference back to this when looking at the security measures they put in place, such as the current sales data were typically used.

Task 2

This task comprised of two parts. In part A, students needed to merge the datasets into one single clean dataset that would be relevant to Green Living Data Ltd. They were asked to calculate the average, maximum and minimum for customers' daily cumulative solar panel kWh electricity and gas usage for the year and exclude any dates before 2021. They were also required to produce a log of the process. In part B, they needed to produce a log that would look at the database structure, identify keys, and discuss how they performed the formatting and removal of data.

Part A

Overall students performed reasonably well with the task although the amount of work performed on the cleansing and merging contributed to the amount of detail that could be discussed in the written log. This meant that students that performed really well with the cleansing and merging had more to discuss, meaning their log was a lot more detailed.

Higher performing students considered all the data they had been provided with and brought together the most useful data into a format that was easy to work with. For example, they may have looked at attitude towards panels and then provided multiple tables that considered things like attractiveness, important factors, climate change, and green technology in general. Filters and slicers typically used to help break down the tables into something clear that would help the business. The written log then clearly explaining the process followed when cleansing and merging, with clear explanations for why this had been done. It was easy to see the thought process of the students, and the skills were clearly demonstrated.

Students that typically didn't perform as well tended to select less data and just bring these across into one dataset with very little evidence of cleansing taking place. Very simplistic filters had sometimes been used. Due to this, the logs were less detailed as they couldn't always justify how the data would meet the business aims, or the links were very limited. In most instances, there were basic skills demonstrated, such as formatting the data so it displayed as percentages (for example, in the table relating to attractiveness of solar panels). Other formatting may have been more simplistic, such as alignment of cells, removal of rows with any missing data, and use of find and replace. Very limited, if any, use of formulas demonstrated.

To achieve well in this task, students need to select a wider range of data that is relevant to the business goals. This would allow them more opportunities to explain and demonstrate a wider range of formatting and cleansing skills while providing a single dataset that is more informative. Students need to be more confident in their ability to work with the data and clearly explain what they have done and why. They should also refer back to the brief to make sure they have included all elements that the task asks for.

Part B

For part B, higher performing students typically continued their written log by expanding to include the four elements identified in the brief. It was clear that students had considered things like primary keys and discussed how things like the customer ID could be used as primary. They looked at the structuring of the data and explained why they had approached things this way. They also tended to clearly discuss any formatting and removal of variables that was not suitable for analysis, demonstrating use of tools like power query.

Students that didn't perform as well did seem to look at primary keys, such as customer ID and Model number, but just said these would be the keys, no explanation why. Overall, a reasonable attempt did seem to be made at this task, with just the depth and a lack of detail resulting in many of the marks lost.

To achieve well in the task, students need to be able to clearly explain what they have done, why they have done it, and use a range of tools to be able to reformat data and remove variables that are not suitable.

Task 3

This task comprised of two parts. For part A, students were required to create a dashboard, along with a written log. For part B, they were to perform a statistical test and explain their findings.

Part A

Overall, students performed really well with this task. Some of the dashboards created were the best we have seen across all series. The students were provided with some key information that the dashboard needed, such as best pricing strategy and selling the most efficient Photo Voltaic (PV) solar panels.

Higher performing students produced some excellent dashboards that looked very professional and provided most, if not all, of the information required by Green Living Data Ltd. The dashboards typically consisted of a main dashboard that provided a clear snapshot of key data. They also typically included instructions for the user for elements like slicers. Suitable graphs and charts were used to display the information, all with headings that clearly explained the purpose and legends where needed. Navigation was also used to help the user move through the dashboard. Accompanying this was a detailed log that explained the dashboard along with clear justifications for the type of charts and graphs used as well as how the data meets the business goals.

Students that didn't perform as well created dashboards, but these tended to be a lot more simplistic with just sheets containing data, usually in table format, and the occasional graph or chart. These dashboards didn't tend to include any form of navigation or instructions for use (although due to the style instructions would not have been required). There were also instances where graphs were included but the heading, titles or legend was not complete, so it was difficult to see what the chart was showing. The log also tended to be a lot more simplistic, due to the detail in the dashboard, being more descriptive of what has been created rather than explaining the reason for the choices.

To achieve well in this task, students need to improve their skills in creating a working dashboard. They need to be able to explore the client's requirements and then structure the dashboard in a way that the client can easily find the information needed. It would be beneficial if they were confident in using charts and graphs and understanding which type would be best suited to the type of data they are using. It would also help if students included information on the dashboard to explain what the graph is showing, such as a suitable title or a legend if required. This additional detail would provide students with more to talk about in their written logs. It would also help if students became more confident in providing justifications for their choices rather than just being descriptive.

Part B

Overall, students performed well with this task. This task was challenging as they had been asked to perform a correlation between purchase and age. However, they were only provided with purchases and general age demographics.

Higher performing students identified that this was not possible without knowing the age of the customers, so additional data would help with this. They then continued to either perform an analysis based on current purchases based on typical ages, which provided some data, other students explained what they would have done if they had ages by including additional data to the dataset, and other students identified that, as this wasn't possible, they explained what they would have done and performed a different statistical analysis which would help meet a business aim. This clearly demonstrated their understanding of what was required and provided evidence that they could perform a statistical analysis.

Students that didn't perform as well still managed to identify that the data didn't provide them with a way to perform the statistical analysis and in its place performed a different type of analysis. This was still a good attempt at this task and just lost marks where the process was either not performed as well or the findings were not explained.

To achieve better in this task, students need to be able to explain what the data is showing them. Rather than being just descriptive of a process, there needs to be some greater understanding demonstrated of what the data is actually telling the student.

Task 4

There is only one part to this task and students typically perform well overall in this. Here, the students need to create a presentation that includes visualisations of completed analysis showing observed trends and patterns via the use of graphs and charts. This should be accompanied by a narrative with explanations, all aligned to the client brief.

Higher performing students created a professional looking presentation. These were clearly focused on the client brief and outlined the key aims and objectives of the business. The presentation included several charts / graphs taken from the dashboard and included either slide notes and / or audio recording which clearly explained each slide in detail. The presentation mostly included plans for increasing sales, with suggestions based on the dataset findings such as areas in the UK they should focus on. They all included a clear conclusion to summarise their findings.

Students that didn't perform as well produced presentations with either accompanying notes or audio. These were often very plain looking, sometimes with a dark background and some dark text making things difficult to read on screen occasionally. They didn't always consider the business aims and objectives, and sometimes the data presented didn't seem as relevant, such as a slide just looking at battery vs non battery. Also, the information on screen wasn't always clear to understand. This may be due to the limited dashboard they produced, as this has just been included in the presentation as it is. These presentations also didn't always explain how sales could be increased and seemed to end abruptly without a closing conclusion.

To achieve better in this task, students could look to improve the information that they are providing. They are provided with their dashboard and the datasets so they can use this information in the best way to make sure the presentation clearly addresses the points highlighted in the brief. They should be able to produce a nice-looking presentation that looks at the business aims, uses charts and graphs to meet the points highlighted in the brief, along with business goals, includes a clear and concise narrative, and concludes with any key points they need to make.

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