



ASSESSMENT & EXAMINATIONS

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NSC 2011 CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

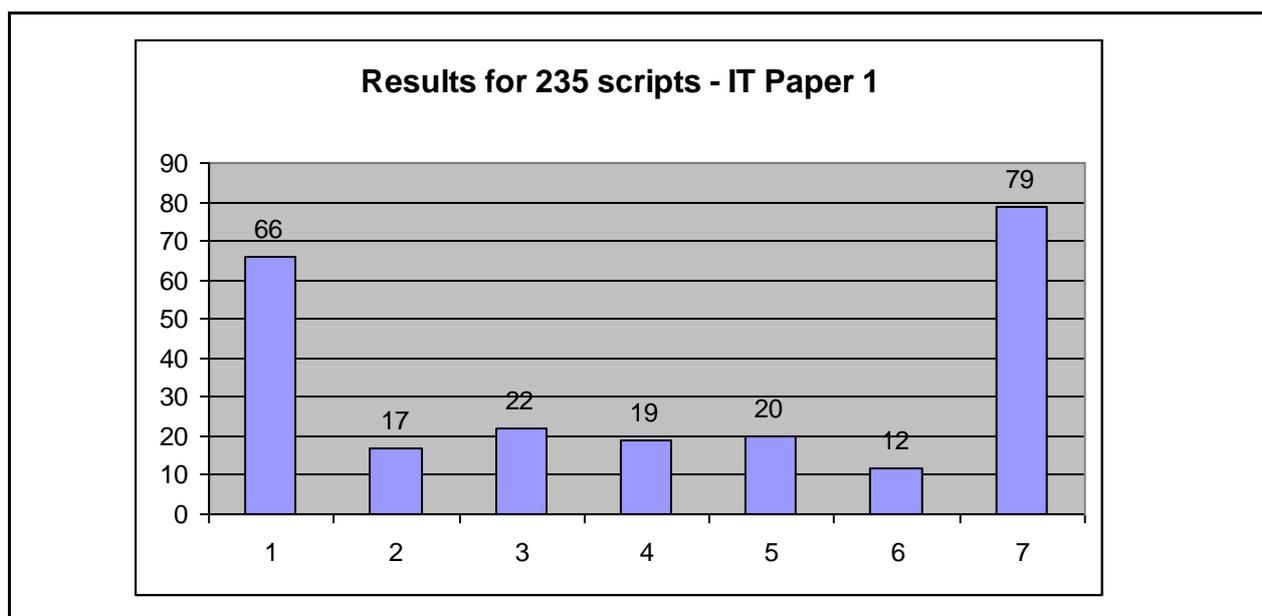
SUBJECT	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
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PAPER	1
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DATE OF EXAMINATION:	NOV 2011	DURATION:	3HRS
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SECTION 1:

(General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)



As in the past the result for Paper 1 is a mixed one – some learners did extremely well and others did extremely poorly. It is quite obvious that there are centres where the subject is not taught as it should be. There are also centres where it seems as if only the SQL section of the paper was actually taught. Some of these learners barely attempted questions 2 and 3.

Look at the following table of the averages for the three questions:



SECTION 2:

Comment on candidates' performance in individual questions

(It is expected that a comment will be provided for each question on a separate sheet).

QUESTION 1
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Learners did better in question 1 than in the other questions. Most learners had a fair knowledge of SQL and only battled with the questions which were a little more advanced.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Question 1.4 A lot of learners did not seem to know the concept GROUP BY.
(a) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
SQL can in my view only be taught properly by doing a lot of examples with a lot of different scenarios and type of questions.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
It would be good for every learner to have a document with examples of all the type of questions one can expect in a practical year end paper. Especially the questions where dates are involved often confuse the learners.

QUESTION 2
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Learners did not perform as well in this question as in question 1. . Most of the learners attempted this question, but it is obvious that in the weaker centres the learners were taught a pattern for the methods and these were then applied, whether they were relevant or not.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Some learners are used to reading from a textfile and then creating an array of objects. Because this question was put differently some were caught unawares – some not even being able to create the single object. It was however not an unfair question.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning

As mentioned before – provide lots of different types of questions for the learners to work through.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners

The main unit had a <uses uHousehold> declared and the learners are used to doing this at the top of the unit. This caused some confusion, aggravated when the class unit was changed to uHouseholdxxxxx (exam number).

(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

QUESTION 3

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

The results for this question was definitely the weakest of the paper. Candidates that battled with the other two questions seemed to have given up hope – or had no time left – when they reached question 3. In most of the centres the average for this question was the lowest of the 3 questions.

(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

One of the biggest problems was the fact that the learners had to work with two (or even three!) textfiles at the same time. They battled to work this out. A lot of them seemed to be comfortable with reading from the textfile, but not writing to the file.

Question 3.2: Very few learners knew how to test for alphabetical characters. Others only tested that the first character is not a numerical character but therefore excludes any other special characters.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning

Make sure that the concept of sets get revised properly (normally taught in grade 10) and also give a lot of validating examples during the year.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners

e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- Learners should be subjected to more of a variety of questions during the year – a lot of them seem to think only according to set patterns.
- Schools need to make sure that they offer this subject only if they have a qualified teacher to teach the work. This seems to be a huge problem in many of the centres.
- Teachers/schools should ensure that the saving process happens properly. In one or two of the centres there were executable files with some output, but the actual coding was not available.
- Many learners do not understand what is being asked and do not read carefully enough.

SIGNATURE OF CHIEF MARKER: _____