

PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING PRACTICAL ICT TESTS

The Supervisor

A suitably competent supervisor, who may be the candidates' tutor, is responsible for the administration of the practical tests according to these instructions. The supervisor is responsible for the preparation of the hardware and software for the test.

Timetabling of the Practical Tests

CIE does not timetable the practical tests in the same way as most IGCSE and AS & A Level written papers. The IGCSE and AS & A Level timetable will specify a period within which candidates must take the two practical tests for each syllabus. Within this period, Centres may conduct the practical tests at any convenient time or times. Candidates must complete each practical test in a single session.

Wherever possible, candidates from the same Centre should sit their assessment at the same time. If more than one session is necessary to accommodate all candidates, these sessions should follow on from each other. However, Centres do not need to sequester candidates until other candidates have taken the test.

When arranging examination dates, Centres should take into account the time needed to set up the system and should allow contingency planning (e.g. to reschedule examination times due to possible hardware failure) wherever possible.

Preparation for the Practical Tests

Before the candidates take a practical test, the supervisor must work through a past/specimen paper, using the hardware and software that the candidates will be using. **Any system errors or issues must be reported on the Supervisors Report Folder (SRF). Centres are no longer required to submit a Supervisor worked copy.**

Centres are responsible for ensuring that the hardware and software candidates will be using is in full working order and that it will enable them to meet all the performance criteria as specified in the syllabus. CIE will not take into consideration errors resulting from faulty software or hardware when marking candidates' work.

Practical papers are no longer available in electronic format; printed copies will be sent to Examination Officers. Practical paper packets must not be opened before the examination.

Source files will be available to Cambridge International Centres **three days** before the examination window so they can be downloaded by the Centres.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that a spare computer/printer is available in case of equipment failure. If equipment failure occurs, the invigilator should permit the candidate to move to another machine, making sure that the candidate does not have access to other candidates' work (e.g. by using secure areas on all machines or changing the default settings). Centres must ensure that sufficient stocks of toner, paper etc., are provided.

There is no requirement for candidates to print their work in colour. CIE will not give extra credit to work printed in colour. It is, however, the candidate's responsibility to ensure that adequate differentiation is present on monochrome printouts (e.g. sectors of a pie chart are distinguishable). Where appropriate, invigilators must make candidates aware of this in an announcement immediately before the start of the test.

Invigilation of Practical Tests

At least two invigilators must be present for the test. It is essential that a suitably competent invigilator, preferably the supervisor, is present in the test room to deal with any technical difficulties

that may arise. If the supervisor has been involved in the preparation of any of the candidates for the test, then a further (third) invigilator must be present at all times. It is left to the discretion of the Centre to appoint suitable personnel, but the availability of an extra technician in addition to the invigilators is encouraged. Centres must carry out all invigilation in accordance with the regulations detailed in 3.1.4 of the Centre Handbook. The supervisor and invigilators must consult the syllabus specific procedures for conducting practical tests and the supervisor instructions for practical tests.

The document *Brief Guide to Invigilating ICT Practical Tests* is given in the *Procedures for Conducting Practical Tests* issued on CIE Direct in advance of the exam. Invigilators must use the guide in conjunction with the regulations contained in the Centre Handbook.

Candidates must not have access during the test to their own electronic files or personal notes, pre-prepared templates or other files. Candidates are not allowed to refer to textbooks or Centre-prepared manuals during the test. During the practical test candidates may use English or simple translation dictionaries, spell-checkers, software help facilities and manufacturer manuals on the software packages during the practical test. Candidates may use software wizards provided by the original software vendor. The Supervisor/invigilators must not give any other help to the candidates during the test, unless there is an equipment failure. The supervisor must record in their Supervisor's Report Form (SRF) any such assistance given to an individual candidate beyond that given to the group as a whole and must submit their report to CIE with the candidates' work.

Candidates must not communicate with each other in any way (including the use of email, via the Internet or intranet) and Centres must ensure the security of the individual candidates' files. Centres are strongly advised to consider setting up passwords to control login procedures and to ensure that only authorised access to files is possible. Candidates must not have access to portable storage media e.g. memory sticks or floppy disks. Invigilators must be constantly vigilant and observant throughout the test.

Printing candidates' work

Candidates' work will take the form of printouts. Centres must not submit other forms of output (e.g. floppy disks, CD-ROM). Each printout must include the candidate's name, number and Centre number. Candidates must enter this information before printing. This information must not be hand-written. CIE will not mark any printouts with either hand-written details or no candidate details. If candidates produce additional rough copies of printouts, these must be neatly crossed through to indicate that they are not the copy to be marked.

Candidates must send all work to the printer during the duration of the test. Only in the event of a printer breakdown may the Centre use its discretion on extending the time specified for the test. The supervisor must record this as part of their report. Printouts may be collated after the test time specified under supervised conditions.

It is essential that an invigilator gives the printouts to candidates and that candidates do not collect the printouts from the printer themselves. Invigilators must make sure that candidates are given only their own printouts.

After the Practical Examination

Candidates must send all work to the printer during the duration of the test. Collating printouts may be done after the test time specified under supervised conditions. Where specified, tasks such as highlighting parts of the printout can be done after the test time specified.

At the end of the practical task, candidates must present the invigilator with their final printouts. Each printout should include the candidate's name, number and Centre number. This information should be printed, not hand-written. Any printouts with hand-written details or no candidate details will not be marked.

Candidates must date their test papers and submit them with their printouts.

All assessment material (including the practical test papers and candidates' completed work) should be collected and placed into the candidate Assessment Record Folder (ARF).

All draft copies and rough work not to be submitted must be destroyed.

Technical Problems

In the event of a system crash, software failure, power cut or damage to equipment occurring during the test, any action taken must ensure that the Centre can guarantee the integrity of the test.

If a candidate appears to be having problems with faulty equipment, the invigilator must inform the supervisor who must determine whether the fault lies with the equipment or the candidate. If equipment failure occurs with an individual computer, the invigilator should permit the candidate to move to another machine if necessary. Invigilators are advised to check that candidates do not have access to other candidates' work (e.g. by using secure areas on all machines or changing the default settings).

If equipment can be restored, the invigilator may give extra time to the candidates to compensate for time lost while the problem was resolved as long as the Centre can guarantee the integrity of the test. If equipment failure makes it impossible to continue with the test (e.g. power has been lost indefinitely or the entire candidate's work has been lost or corrupted), the entire candidate's work must be destroyed and the Centre should allow the candidate a second attempt at the test on a different day. This must only be a last resort.

If there has been an equipment failure, the supervisor must submit a detailed report to CIE Examiners University of Cambridge International Examinations in the Supervisor's Report Folder (SRF) with the candidates' work. The report must state the nature of the problem, the candidates affected, and the actions taken.

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Supervisor instructions for practical papers 2 and 3

1. The Practical Papers will be despatched to Centres as hard copy. Practical Paper packets must not be opened before the examination. Source files will be available to Cambridge International Centres three days before the examination window so they can be downloaded by the Centres. Source files will be made available to Parent Centres earlier than this in order to allow them time to distribute the files as necessary.
2. CIE does not timetable the practical tests in the same way as most IGCSE and AS & A Level written papers. The IGCSE and AS & A Level timetable will specify a period within which candidates must take the two practical tests for each syllabus. Within this period, Centres may conduct the practical tests at any convenient time or times. Candidates must complete each practical test in a single session.
3. Wherever possible, candidates from the same Centre should sit the assessment at the same time. If more than one session is necessary to accommodate all candidates, those sessions should follow on from each other.
4. Source files will be sent via CIE Direct as a .zip file email attachment. The relevant files should be made available to each candidate as appropriate. Candidates should be instructed where to access these files during the assessment, in the event of any problems with internet access.

The source material contains files of the following formats: .rtf, .csv, .txt, .htm and .jpg. Centres must ensure that the data files (in particular .csv files) are in a format accessible to each candidate.

5. If you experience any difficulties receiving the files or opening .csv files due to issues relating to regional settings, list separators or decimal markers, please contact CIE Customer Services immediately at international@cie.org.uk, as alternative versions of these files can be made available on request.
6. A secure area should be set up to store supporting files for the assessment and to allow candidates to save their work. This area must not be accessible to candidates at any time other than during the examination. Centres are advised to use password-controlled access for candidates.
7. Centres are responsible for ensuring that appropriate hardware and software is available for each candidate, that it is in full working order and there are adequate printing facilities.
8. Centres are encouraged to allow candidates to access internet and email 'live' wherever possible, but an alternative should be prepared in case of server failure, connection problems etc. Candidates should be made clearly aware of the alternative arrangements for sending emails and accessing files before the start of the examination.
9. Similarly, where assessment tasks require candidates to send a message to a given email address, prompting an auto-respond message, email can be sent internally. In such cases the email should be waiting in the candidate's email inbox before the assessment starts.
10. Candidates must **NOT** have access to their own electronic files or personal notes, pre-prepared templates, past papers or other files during the examination. Candidates may use dictionaries, spellcheckers (UK English), the software help facilities, and the manufacturer manuals on the software packages during the practical test. Candidates may use software wizards provided by the original software vendor. Candidates are **NOT** allowed to refer to textbooks or centre-prepared manuals during the examination. No further help may be given to the candidates during the test unless there is an equipment failure. Any such assistance

given to an individual candidate which is beyond that given to the group as a whole must be recorded as part of a supervisor report which is submitted to examiners with the candidate work.

11. At the end of the examination time, please check that candidates print their work, even if they have not completed the paper. Candidates should ensure that their name, Centre number and candidate number appear on all printouts even if they have not reached a point in the question paper instructing them to include these details; work will not be marked if these details are not present.
12. Each candidate's work and question paper should be submitted in the appropriate ARF (**Assessment Record Folder**).
13. The supervisor must include details of the software used by the candidates for each paper and a report on any technical problems encountered during the examination in the **Supervisor Report Folder (SRF)** provided.
14. If you have not received the ARF or SRF, contact Customer Services at international@cie.org.uk.
15. After the assessment, the test papers used by the candidates should be submitted in the ARF. Spare copies should be kept under secure conditions **until 15 November**. Candidates are not permitted to retain a copy of the test, any printouts produced during the test, or any electronic files which form part of the test or have been produced during the test. Candidates' work must be kept securely by the Centre between the end of the test and submission to CIE.
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