Silver Unit 6 - Specialist Software

Relevant LINKS

BACK TO ITQ UNITS **[1]**

Overview

This is the ability to select and use a suitable specialist software application to carry out an appropriate data processing task. It includes understanding the capabilities of the software and the types of tasks for which it is suitable, as well as the skills and techniques needed to use the software application appropriately and effectively.

This unit is about the skills and knowledge needed by an IT User to use basic specialist software tools and techniques appropriately for straightforward or routine information. Any aspect that is unfamiliar will require support and advice from others. **Specialist software tools and techniques will be defined as 'basic' because:**

- the software tools and functions involved will be pre-defined or commonly used
- the range of inputting, manipulation and outputting techniques are straightforward or routine
- data types and structure will be predetermined or familiar

Example of context: Learning to produce HTML using a simple editor

Activities supporting the assessment of this award

Assessor's guide to interpreting the criteria

General Information

QCF general description for Level 1 qualifications

- Achievement at QCF level 1 (EQF Level 2) reflects the ability to use relevant knowledge, skills and procedures to complete routine tasks. It includes responsibility for completing tasks and procedures subject to direction or guidance.
- Use knowledge of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined, routine tasks. Be aware of information relevant to the area of study or work
- Complete well-defined routine tasks. Use relevant skills and procedures. Select and use relevant information. Identify whether actions have been effective.
- Take responsibility for completing tasks and procedures subject to direction or guidance as needed

Requirements

- Standards must be confirmed by a trained Silver Level Assessor or higher

- Assessors must at a minimum record assessment judgements as entries in the on-line mark book on the INGOTs.org Markbook Site.

- Routine evidence of work used for judging assessment outcomes in the candidates' records of their day to day work will be available from their e-portfolios and on-line work. Assessors should ensure that relevant web pages are available to their account manager on request by supply of the URL.

- When the candidate provides evidence of matching all the criteria to the specification subject to the guidance below, the assessor can request the award using the link on the certification site. The Account Manager will request a random sample of evidence from candidates' work that verifies the assessor's judgement.

- When the Account Manager is satisfied that the evidence is sufficient to safely make an award, the candidate's success will be confirmed and the unit certificate will be printable from the web site.

- This unit should take an average level 1 learner 30 hours of work to complete.

Assessment Method

Assessors can score each of the criteria L, S, H. N indicates no evidence and is the default starting position. L indicates some capability but secure capability has not yet been achieved and some help is still required. S indicates that the candidate can match the criterion to its required specification. H indicates performance that goes beyond the expected in at least some aspects. Candidates are required to achieve at least S on all the criteria to achieve the unit.

Expansion of the assessment criteria

1. Input, organise and combine information using specialist software

1.1 I can input relevant information accurately into existing templates and/or files so that it is ready for processing
Evidence: Candidates working files or web pages

Additional information and guidance
If this work involves simple programming activities it is sufficient for the candidate to follow instructions to make accurate sequences that will run as a routine to do something useful. This might be entering the sequence of instructions needed to draw a shape on the screen. They should be aware of the need for accuracy and that even minor errors in what they enter will prevent the routine from working. In visual environments, dragging symbols or icons representing instructions and/or data will constitute inputting relevant data to the system.

1.2 I can organise and combine information of different forms or from different sources
Evidence: Candidates' working files, web pages or responses to internally set test or task.

Additional information and guidance

Candidate should show that they can follow instructions to combine text and graphics through the use of sequences of code. This could be the HTML tags mixed with text on a web page which display

pictures and text or link to a video. At this level, it is sufficient that they take responsibility for completing a short task give clear instructions and guidance on what to do. Encourage use of the internet to explore options and find out more about the application being studied.

1.3 I can follow local and/or legal guidelines for the storage and use of data where available
This criterion should be assessed in the context of the target specialist software.

Evidence: Assessor witnessing, compliance with copyright, on-line account and content.

Additional information and guidance

Candidates should understand that an acceptable use policy is intended to support safe and responsible use of ICT. Local policy for using the network and the AUP for the INGOT learning site are examples. (PLTS)

They should have a basic understanding of copyright and show evidence that they respect copyright by using suitably licensed resources given guidance. (PLTS) Evidence from making an account on the INGOT learning site and agreeing to the AUP and observing it during the course.

They should realise that there are technical constraints on tasks such as size and format of files, filters that make web sites inaccessible in some environments. They should be beginning to relate technical and security issues to staying safe on-line.

1.4 I can respond appropriately to data entry error messages

Candidates should notice spelling errors underlined in red and check them. There should be no spelling errors that are obvious from a spell check. They should pick up spelling and syntax errors in any code or instructions they are developing.

Evidence: Candidates work free from errors. Assessor witnessing. Centre set test or task.

Additional information and guidance
The errors generated will depend on the system being used. In general CKeditor in the INGOT community learning site is very tolerant of errors and in some cases will automatically fix bad HTML code. Candidates should realise that if a tag appears as text displayed in the web page it is most likely because the tag is broken so the system is treating it as if it was simply text rather than an instruction to do something. The overall aim is that the candidate can identify data entry errors from what the system is showing them. At this level it will involve relatively short programs, scripts or mark up with guidance from the assessor.

2. Use tools and techniques to edit, process, format and present information

2.1 I can use appropriate tools and techniques to edit, process or format information
Use an editor for simple programs constructed under guidance keeping the code neat and easy to follow. Add comments to code and make it generally easy to follow.

Evidence: Source code of their programs and routines.

Additional information and guidance
In this case we are treating the program source code as information. If the work is e.g. using CK editor to process HTML in a learning site page, use the "Switch to plain editor" to view the HTML and switch back to the formatted page view. Again at this level instructions will need to be provided that are clear and unambiguous. Candidates should appreciate that the text and HTML layout will not be identical to the viewed layout. They should experiment with deleting and adding tags in the plain text editor to see their effects. In other programming environments, short sequences of code of

(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){ (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o), m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m) })(window,document,'script','//www.google-analytics.com/analytics.js','ga'); ga('create', 'UA-46896377-2', 'auto'); ga('send', 'pageview');

around 10 to 20 lines is sufficient as long as the editing and formatting processes are clear. There should be evidence of several pieces of work providing a basis to learn and reinforce the basic principles.

2.2 I can check information meets needs, using IT tools and making corrections as necessary
Candidates should try out short sequences of code and debug them by identifying where problems are located.

Evidence: Candidate's work and assessor witnessing the process. Centre set test or task to identify simple problems and fix them.

Additional information and guidance
In the case of HTML, they should be able to relate simple formatting problems to the tags. e.g. a missing tag resulting in the whole text being bold or similar with heading tags. Similar simple debugging of short coding sequences in other programming environments or using simple scripts.

2.3 I can use appropriate presentation methods and accepted layouts
Candidates should show that the output of their work is appropriately presented. They should be able to follow concise instructions to obtain usable results.

Evidence: Presentation of outputs from candidate's work

Additional information and guidance

In the case of HTML editing, the output is a web page. This should be formatted to a simple given specification. E.g. Heading 1 style centred for the title, Heading 2 style left aligned for side headings, an image in an appropriate format. At this level short and simple is but high quality is best. The candidate needs to demonstrate that they can get good quality results subject to supervision and guidance. This work might be combined with that in the unit on web site software.

Moderation/verification

The assessor should keep a record of assessment judgements made for each candidate and make notes of any significant issues for any candidate. They must be prepared to enter into dialogue with their Account Manager and provide their assessment records to the Account Manager through the on-line mark book. They should be prepared to provide evidence as a basis for their judgements through reference to candidate e-portfolios. Before authorising certification, the Account Manager must be satisfied that the assessors judgements are sound.

Links
[1] http://theingots.org/community/ITQ_UNIT_development