

SECTION A – Multiple Choice.

Many candidates did not do well in the multiple choice questions. It is important for educators to explain the concept of “distracters” and to emphasise to learners that this section of the exam must not be rushed, but rather considered carefully.

SECTION B – Hardware and System Software.

Educators need to give more than a superficial knowledge of concepts such as cache memory. This was confused with other forms of caching and not answered very thoroughly. Many learners did not know about DDR ram, even though detailed answers were not required here. Learners generally understood commonly used peripherals and graphics cards and where they attached to the motherboard. Questions like these are likely to be asked again, as are questions on pipelining, which were not included in this exam.

The question on multi-tasking was badly answered. Most learners have very vague ideas as to what this section is about. Also, learners got mixed up between an IDE and a compiler, and were not, in many cases, able to explain what the Java compiler does.

SECTION C – Data Communications and Networks.

Many learners did well in this section of the work; some became confused with the different cable types and their advantages and disadvantages. Packet switching was also a topic that was not well handled, many learners having a vague idea, but not understanding how bandwidth relates to this concept.

The last question, relating to protecting information on a network, was not well thought through. Many learners thought about the Internet – LAN concept, and just answered “firewall” in the hopes of getting it right.

Social and Ethical issues was generally well handled. Learners should be reminded by their teachers that they need to put down a point for every mark that they can earn in this section, and that their points should not be duplicated, using different words. General knowledge topics should be discussed regularly in class. (It was clear that many learners did not really know what an “expert system” is).

SECTION D – Programming and Software Development.

Learners have not been taught about Random Access Files. These concepts are still important, even though we have used Java to connect to databases. The concepts of Dynamic and static structures were not well handled. Many learners clearly did not understand the recursion question and were very confused when trying to find examples of dynamic structures.