



Free-Standing Mathematics Qualification

Making Sense of Data 6983

Foundation Level

Report on the Examination

2008 examination – June series

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Making Sense of Data (6983) Examination

General

The majority of candidates were well prepared for this paper. Overall, many very good scripts were submitted and pleasing standards were achieved. Candidates scored well on questions one and five. Presentation and working were generally quite good, usually with appropriate methods that were able to be followed. However, weaker candidates rarely showed adequate working and this gained either full marks or zero marks; for example in question 6, the pie chart, and question 3. A number of candidates apparently did not possess a protractor and attempted to draw freehand the pie chart in question 4.

Questions found difficult were:

- Fractions, question 2, part (a)
- Finding one quantity as a percentage of another, question 3, part (a)
- Ratios, question 3 part (b).

Question 1

This question was answered very well by virtually all candidates. Part (a), (b), (c) and (f) were usually all answered correctly. If any errors did occur, these were in parts (d) and (e), where the median and the mean were interpreted in reverse order. In part (e), some candidates divided 62 by 12 and truncated their result to 5.1 or 5.16, both of which were penalised.

Question 2

Most candidates found 3 grams as the amount of fibre in a serving of broccoli. However, relatively few candidates could obtain $\frac{3}{15}$ as the required fraction, and of those who did, it was rare to see the correct fraction simplified from $\frac{3}{15}$ to $\frac{1}{5}$. In part (b), most candidates could express their fraction as a percentage.

Question 3

In part (a) many candidates found 19, the difference in the number of hours worked even though this was not required. Unfortunately, most candidates were unable to find 41 as a percentage of 60.

In part (b) it was rare to find candidates who showed they realised that in order to divide in the ratio of 1 : 5, six parts were required. Most correct answers appeared as if by magic with no working shown.

Question 4

Many correct bar charts were seen in answers to this question. However marks were lost when candidates failed to start their axis at zero, failed to use a linear scale for the vertical axis, failed

to label the vertical axis, or failed to label their bars correctly. Others plotted ten bars rather than the five required.

Question 5

Candidates answered this question very well and it proved to be a good source of marks. Most candidates appreciated that more than 30 tallies were given and, in part (b), correctly added the new responses. The pictogram in part (c) was also well answered although a few did not use a sensible half symbol and others did not label each of the categories of response.

Question 6

This question proved a good source of marks for the majority of candidates who were able to calculate the correct sector angles for the pie chart. Unfortunately, a minority did not have access to a protractor while some who did were unable to measure and label the pie chart sectors. A few attempted to draw the pie chart freehand. Those who used a “percentage” protractor must appreciate that they either gain full marks if the pie chart is drawn and labelled accurately but no marks if it is not drawn accurately. Method marks cannot be given if no calculations are shown.

Question 7

The last question on the paper was badly answered. Although the vertical scale was marked “cost (pence)”, many candidates wrote the scale in pounds indicating, for example, 1.50 instead of 150. Others did not use a linear scale for their axis. A number of candidates drew a bar chart rather than a time chart. In part (b), many assumed that the line could be extrapolated and did not consider that the calls would become free if the cost dropped another 5.5pence. Others decided “everything” was becoming dearer and thus the price of phone calls would increase.

Turn over ►

Portfolio

FSMQ Foundation Level – June 2008

The portfolios submitted by many centres were of a good standard and the Specification for each unit was followed carefully. However, just a few centres did not study the requirements in enough detail and this resulted in inappropriate tasks being undertaken by candidates. It is in the spirit of FSMQ that work from other subjects should form the basis for tasks but these tasks must fulfill the requirements.

Centres submitting **Managing Money** portfolios produced some good work with excellent use of spreadsheets. Centres sometimes did not encourage independent work by candidates, which restricted the marks attainable in Strand One. For a mark of over 40, considerable work on fractions must be carried out.

Making Sense of Data portfolios showed good independent work with reference to candidates' work in other subjects, which was encouraging. A few centres did not appreciate the twelve elements that must be present for a 'complete' portfolio.

It was pleasing to see more portfolios submitted under '**Working in 2 and 3 Dimensions**'. There was a strong link to other areas of technology in these portfolios and this is to be encouraged.

Overall, candidates exhibited independent work in a variety of fields and were able to explain their findings in straightforward terms.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.