

# INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES (ITS315113)

## GENERAL COMMENTS / OBSERVATIONS

There was a range of responses to questions in the 2017 Exam Paper. Most candidates attempted all questions and many scored well in the presentation criterion (8). In general, technical terms were used and explained well as was referencing throughout the paper. For candidates, some general points to consider:

- Students need to read the questions carefully and where it requests them to address the case study, they should do this explicitly.
- There was detail missing in some of the specific, theory based questions.
- Very few students addressed the significant advantages of a well-designed Information System where collected data allows the organisation to make timely and effective decisions that can have significant impact on the future of the business. Many discussed the front-end benefits that would be provided to the businesses customers but did not elaborate on how the system could improve the business through the use of information and knowledge.
- Many students listed advantages and disadvantages in relation to organisational function rather than the impact of the Information System and the pros and cons of how it supported the organisations function.

## SECTION A

### Question 1

(a) Successful answers included a table similar to:

	Positives	Negatives
Data		
Equipment		
People		
Procedures		

The detail in the table had to relate back specifically to the case study. General responses were not viewed as fully correct answers.

(b) Successful answers discussed how inefficient the current information system was and then discussed the changes that could be made to improve efficiency. Better answers provided realistic improvements given the constraints provided in the case study.

### Question 2

A number of candidates were confused by the phases of the PLC and SDLC and hence answered incorrectly. Checking back with the course documents is recommended here.

Better answers did however, include:

- (a) Creating a project, resource, financial, quality, risk, assessment, communications and procurement plans are all activities that could be included in the planning phase. Contracting the suppliers is also important.
- (b) In the design stage of the SDLC you would: use available technology to plan the creation of an information system; create any technical documentation such as network diagrams, coding flowcharts, algorithms etc to aid in the development stage; design alternative approaches to determine the most efficient solution for development.
- (c) Creating a project closure report, paying suppliers, presenting to clients, completing documentation and handing over deliverables are all activities that could be undertaken in the close phase of the PLC.

### Question 3

A number of candidates scored poorly in Question 3. This was due to a lack of understanding of the differences between legal, social and ethical issues associated with an information system. There were a number of overlapping answers across the three parts of the question.

Better answers specifically addressed current laws (eg National Privacy Principles, Copyright Act, Spam Act etc), social (employment, health, access, security, usability etc) or ethical issues (conflicts of interests, systems administrators access, parental control, business ethics, ethical dilemmas etc). Most candidates were able to address NPP but better answers came from those that identified the exact NPP and elaborated on this further connecting to the case study where required.

Many “starting an online business” guides can help in giving an insight into the current issues small businesses face. Once again, all answers had to relate back to the case study and general answers did not score highly.

## SECTION B

### Question 4

- (a) A simple listing of two URL's was needed here. More weight was given to part (b) of this question. Candidates should be aware of this and save time in not going into any further detail in part (a).
- (b) Candidates were required to examine two information systems, break them down into their smaller parts and compare for suitability. A table set up as below could help (relating back to the case study):

	Information System 1		Information System 2	
	Suitability	Non- Suitability	Suitability	Non- Suitability
Data				
Equipment				
People				
Procedures				

### Question Five

Once again, a table can help in ensuring the question was answered correctly.

	Advantage 1	Advantage 2	Disadvantage 1	Disadvantage 2
Information System 1				
Information System 2				

After listing down the advantages and disadvantages, candidates were required to make a balanced judgement on which system was most suitable. It was important to provide realistic answers here and relate very closely to the information provided in the case study.

### Question Six

Most candidates attempted this question, but the majority of answers did not address the question fully and instead described a general system, either not related to the case study or not unique and feasible.

As a good example of describing how the parts of an information system are interrelated, the method below was used by some candidates:

“The manager of the business (PEOPLE) entered sales information (DATA) into the computer (EQUIPMENT). This was done on a daily basis (PROCEDURES).” etc.

Higher scores were given to candidates that used clear and unique diagrams which aided in the description of the unique and feasible system.

### Question Seven

This question was handled with mixed results with some candidates describing ALL stages of the SDLC, instead of focussing in on the Development Stage only as the question asked. Candidates are reminded to read the question fully (and make notes of important terms) before attempting answering the question.

For the test plan, (b) candidates needed to list how the IS would be tested, for example:

- All reports generated are accurate
- Is the system able to function efficiently with 100+ concurrent users (load testing)

There were a number of generic test plans presented without any connection to the case study.

### Question 8

As per question 3, this question was handled poorly.

The framing of the question required candidates to consider the various stakeholders in the new system. Better answers included in a table a list of exactly who the stakeholders were.

Candidates were confused of what the difference between the ethical and legal issues were. Some better answers, however, made reference to peak bodies (such as the Australian Computer Society ACS) or specific laws which did help in their explanations.