INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND DIGIAL TECHNOLOGIES (ITS315118)

EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2018 paper provided a case study relevant and easy to understand in the context of a small business. Candidates would have encountered similar examples in mid-year and practice exams. There was however, a range of responses to the questions.

For candidates, some general points to consider:

- Candidates need to pay particular attention to the time allocations for each question and manage their time appropriately. Some students provided more detail than was expected for a particular question and other answers not providing enough detail.

- Students need to read the questions carefully and where required address the case study explicitly.

- Candidates need to be fully aware of which Criterion/Criteria being assessed in each question, which will guide the student's answer more appropriately. In some situations, good but irrelevant answers were provided to particular questions due to a misunderstanding of which Criteria was being assessed.

- There was detail missing is some of the specific, theory-based questions.

- There was confusion around the differences between social, legal and ethical issues for students when answering the Criterion 3 questions.

- Very few students wrote about "Data Flow" as being crucial in an effective Information System and how (when data is handled correctly) this would ensure that the entire system is functional.

- Markers were looking for evidence of a thorough understanding in order to obtain the higher grades. For example, students required more depth about the particular laws in Australia in relation to privacy of students.

- Many students did not appear to have a clear strategy for including diagrams to support an answer. This could be practiced and addressed through the year prior to the exam.

- In Section B – research section, it was apparent that many students simply searched for a common term and reported back on the first link/system returned. It would service students better to take their time and look through the first three or four pages to find a system which may be a better fit.

- Searching techniques could also be improved by searching for reports in the .pdf format.

SAMPLE SOLUTIONS

QUESTION 1

(a) From the case study, students should extract relevant information for each part of an Information System. E.g. procedures - booking data is manually entered into an exercise book "the system" by people - Jim or Marge etc. This would be best represented in a table format.

(b) Students should be able to identify the various ways in which the current system could be improved. It is important not only to identify this, but to detail how they would go about changing this. For example, the current system requires double handling of information (invoices and receipts are kept as hard copy and data needs to be manually entered into their ledger). Students need to explain that instead of this system, they could employ a centralised online database or use accounting software to incorporate both processes. An explanation of the data flow is crucial in describing an effective information system.

QUESTION 2

Students need to ensure they do not simply provide templated responses as their answer. (i.e. copy sections from the notes as to what happens in each stage). Each response should be set in the context of this particular Information System and the answers need to relate back to the case study.

It should be noted, that guidance and correct terminology in this question can be sourced from the course outline rather than completing a web search to garner the answers.

Students need to have a clear understanding of the difference between the PLC and the SDLC.

QUESTION 3

(a) Students should be able to identify some of the key privacy principles such as manner and purpose of collection of information, as well as discussing the broader ethical issues associated with Peter's request. The notion of "ethical dilemmas" can be addressed in this question i.e. "What would you do in this situation…"

(b) Students should be able to discuss the social and ethical issues associated with posting images to social media (such as gaining consent of all involved parties) as well as the associated risks. There is also the notion of "Passing Off" where photographs can be considered to be endorsing products and students need to discuss the issues surrounding this.

QUESTION 4

(a) It is important, when answering this question, that students choose two (markedly) different systems/processes otherwise it will be difficult to compare/contrast the two. Search techniques need to be used so students do not select the first two items that are returned from the results page.

(c) This should be a straightforward comparison of the two selected sites. Best presented in a table format. It is important to address all four parts of the information system. Where information is not readily visible, students should be able to fill in gaps with their understanding of what would be required. e.g. equipment - no details listed on the website but the company would be employing a high-end webserver to host its content, this is most likely provided by a third party given the logo at the bottom of each page and the volume of traffic I would expect this site to handle etc.

QUESTION 5

It is important for students to realise here that part (c) of this question requires more attention (and will gain more marks) than parts (a) and (b).

For part (c) students need to select one of the two researched systems and then justify why they have done so. This could be done be expanding on the case study (small business) and suggesting which of the two systems is most suitable.

QUESTION 6

In this question students are able to combine their research to outline a unique and feasible system that they think will best meet the needs of the client. It is important that the students describe how each part of the system will be addressed e.g. a new online booking website *(equipment)* will be established. Clients *(people)* will enter bookings *(procedures)* via a new web interface etc.

The types of systems suggested can vary widely depending on the background of the student and their focus throughout the year. Examples could include: **Custom Built Solutions** using MS Access, MySQL (or other appropriate applications) or **Open Source Solutions** which may be modified to meet client needs. Students could also discuss **Engaging Firms** which provide Software as a Service (SaaS).

QUESTION 7

(a) Students need to ensure that they do not simply create a templated response i.e. copying sections from the course notes as to what happens in this stage. Responses should be set in the context of this particular Information System.

(b) It is critical that candidates relate answers to the context of this system not just some generic test criteria. A test plan could be presented in a table format.

QUESTION 8

(a) Students should be able to recognise the potential for unethical behaviour, or misuse when using such a tracking system. Legally the business owners may be required to disclose to clients that this system is in use. In answering, students could create a discussion around the legality of any collected data. It is important here that they discuss both ONE Legal and ONE Ethical consideration.

(b) Students could focus on:

SOCIAL

Educating Marge and Jim on appropriate privacy and security practices i.e. using passwords; using public computers or networks or dangers involved around open WiFi networks.

ETHICAL

Students could discuss what data is actually required to run the business and limit the data collected to this. Avoid collecting data because it *may be* useful. Data should only be used for the purpose that it was collected for.

LEGAL

Legally responsible to protect confidential data. Discussion should centre around the Privacy Act at this point.