As candidates in this year’s exam continued to have access to a wide variety of resources to help them, they had a good opportunity to show their understanding of information systems and their current use. The exam was carefully designed with a topic that candidates would readily identify with, and find online examples of. The sequence of the questions followed the chronology of a systems and project development approach – a key part of the curriculum.

Careful reading and full exploration of the questions enabled better responses. Candidates who read the entire exam paper and questions were able to show their understanding much more fully. It appeared that some candidates did not make best use of the time available for each question.

Candidates in this exam are expected to show the depth of their understanding with their responses by suitably addressing the question while making significant reference to the case study scenario and the relevant criterion being examined. Candidates who did this and clearly communicated accurate responses were able to get higher results.

**Question 1**

Candidates had two opportunities in the exam to address Criterion 5. This was in Question 1 (both parts a and b) and 4. The main purpose of these opportunities for this criterion was to evaluate an information system.

In response to Question 1, many candidates offered a commentary on the given information system rather than an evaluation which was what was asked for in the question. For example in Question 1(a) the candidates were asked to ‘write this evaluation’. In some cases candidates simply repeated what was written in the case study, whereas in others candidates wrote a critique. Many candidates were able to list the features of the given information system, often in a table. However, they missed the opportunity to follow this with an evaluation.

**Question 2**

This question was generally not well answered with few responses attracting an ‘A’ standard result.

Compared with the equivalent question last year, candidates did generally recognise the difference between SDLC and Project Lifecycle. The question specifically mentioned the stages which should have been used as the structure for candidate answers. Better answers were generally done in tables with each of the stages used as headings.

Many candidates provide only ‘template’ descriptive answers of the stages and thus did not link the stages specifically asked for, Analysis and Design, to the Café Owner and staff (as asked in 2(a)) with the aim to create a more functional information system.
Question 2(b) required clear discussion of each of the stages of the Project Lifecycle when explaining the implementation of a new information system for the Café.

**Question 3**

Candidates had two opportunities (Question 3 and 6) to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of social issues associated with information systems.

Question 3 required candidates to discuss the ethical concerns and legal implications of supplying data to a neighbouring business. Better answers came from candidates who displayed knowledge of the Privacy Act and the National Privacy Principles and linked these directly to the problem situation. The Spam Act could also have been cited with regard to the cross-promotional advertising campaign.

Better candidates were able to discuss the actual implications and ramifications of not following the relevant laws. Many candidates were happy to say if these laws were broken that the company would get sued and go to jail but the reality is that the company would receive a fine or penalty points for being in breach of these laws. Some candidates went on to discuss the economic implications for the business regarding their ethical use of client data.

**Question 4**

In Part B of the examination paper, candidates were asked to research two different ordering systems and then ‘evaluate the suitability of each’ for the given situation. Many candidates were able to make a comparison of the two systems. This was often done in tabular form. Having done this, however, many candidates missed the need to then make an evaluation of the suitability of each of the two ordering systems to the business being discussed in the case study.

**Question 5**

This question gave the opportunity to recommend one of the researched systems found in Question 4. Candidates should have then explained how the recommended system’s components would work together to meet the client’s situation. Many candidates did not address or didn’t address fully the two parts of this question: firstly, how the components could work together, secondly, to meet the client’s situation.

Candidates with better responses explained how the components integrate. An example response could include:

- how the customer details would be taken and used
- an outline of the processes the café would use to manage the online orders so that it suits their current or planned operations.

Some candidates also used process and/or data flow diagrams to show their ideas on how this could work.
Question 6

Question 6 required candidates to identify and explain the key social, legal and ethical issues associated with implementing a new system and outline some possible solutions to these problems.

Better candidates included responses such as: security issues, privacy issues, old system disposal including archival and safe deletion of old data, data encryption with regard to third party access, and, if modelling the new system on an existing system consideration of copyright issues.

The question also highlighted the issue of customer data being stored by a third party; many candidates failed to address this issue.

In questions 3 and 6, many candidates were unable to show their understanding of morals and ethics and why these can have significant implications and effects on individuals and organisations when using and accessing information systems.

Criterion 8, assessed throughout the paper.

Structuring responses in a logical manner that addresses the question(s) being asked goes towards meeting this criterion standard. Many responses were quite lengthy but either did not address the requirements of the question or follow a logical sequence, making it difficult to determine whether the candidate had met the requirements of the question.

Candidates need to ensure they have addressed what the question has asked:

- in many cases candidates gave generic responses rather than relating the information directly to the case study (Questions 2 A and 2 B)
- Many candidates did not do as the questions requested eg Question 1a ‘Write this evaluation’ Question 4 ‘..evaluate the suitability of each of the two online café ordering systems for this situation’
- Question 5 ‘.. can work together to best meet the client’s situation.’

Candidates found that using tables was a highly effective way of presenting and communicating in many of the questions. If the question asked candidates to evaluate or analyse, this was too often missed and when attempted, not fully addressed in or after the comparison table.

The inclusion of reference URLs for each of the questions at the base of each question as per the exam instructions was also an important part of addressing criterion 8.
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