BCS Higher Education Qualification

Diploma

October 2022

EXAMINERS' REPORT TEMPLATE

IT Project Management

Questions Report:

A1	**Syllabus mapping: 5.1 & 5.2**
	A)Answers to this question generally showed correct understanding of risk. The best answers elaborated with examples, types of risk and pointed out that risk could be positive or negative. b) There were a large range of answers on methods of identifying risks and they received credit if explained in sufficient detail. Single word answers (e.g. Brainstorming) without explanation did not attract full marks since such an answer is vague and does not explain **who** is involved and **how** it can be used in the context of risk management. c) **Impact** and **probability** were often defined correctly, but weak answers such as 'Impact is the impact on a project' attracted no marks. Proximity was less well understood. Very few candidates explained how impact and probability were combined to determine risk exposure. Once again, examples are useful for showing correct understanding. d) Marks were only awarded where risks were related to the scenario; generic risks that could not be applied were not awarded marks. However, there were a large number of good answers that contained detailed explanation and showed good analysis of the scenario. e) Surprisingly, this part of the question was very poorly answered in general. Few candidates appeared to understand what a probability impact matrix is. Good answers provided example risk exposure values in the cells together with risk tolerance line and explanation.
A2	**Syllabus mapping: 2.2, 2.3 & 2.7**
	a. Most candidates who answered this question showed understanding of AoN diagrams and provided a list of the contents of a node. However, it is important to explain terms (e.g. float) to show that it is understood correctly. Similarly, EST LST acronyms need expanding. b. The basic AoN network diagram was often correctly shown, but some candidates arbitrarily added a dependency for activity H rather than connecting it to Start. **It is essential to provide a key to show node format**, otherwise the contents are not defined. (Multiple formats were used). c. Critical path was usually defined correctly. Marks were awarded for correct application of the principles even if the value was incorrect because of errors in the AoN diagram. d. The use of expert judgement for estimation and its relative advantages and disadvantages were generally well explained. e. There were few answers to this part: parametric method of estimation was not well understood, and no answers clearly explained how size and productivity drivers could be used in the scenario provided.

A3	**Syllabus mapping: 4.1, 4.2 & 4.5**
	a. 3 marks were available but few candidates provided the detail for the purpose of project control. Typically they identified that the purpose was to achieve success/ project goal, but omitted detail of measuring, forecasting and improving performance b. 6 marks were available, this was frequently confused for the SDLC or project lifecycle models, rather than control, (PLAN/MONITOR (Collect info on progress) /REVIEW (check & compare with plan) /CONTROL (apply corrections if needed). c. 9 marks were available for explaining data collected and tools used. Many candidates correctly identified time/ cost/ technical progress against specification. The better answers also included the various reports produced in a project and discussed tools such as time boxing, Gantt charts. d. 7 Marks – this part was poorly understood, typically confusing an exception report with an RFC (Request for change). A few marks were typically obtained by mentioning the role of the Project Manager and Project board.
B4	**Syllabus mapping: 3, 3.1 & 3.3**
	a) Many candidates gave correct descriptions of the permissive autocrat and permissive democrat leadership style. A significant number of candidates ignored the first term 'permissive' and simply, incorrectly described the autocratic style and democratic style alone. Losing marks in the process b) Many candidates found difficulty in providing an example of where a directive autocratic style of management would be most appropriate. Answers that emphasised the typical situation of a project being late or falling behind in deliverables would suit the style gained full marks c) This question was well answered by many candidates. In some cases, the distinction between the stages was blurred and in particular the norming/storming stages in the classification.
B5	**Syllabus mapping: 6, 6.3 & 6.6**
	a) This question centred on ISO 9126/ISO 25000. Which is expressly concerned with external quality characteristics of software. Few answers acknowledged the external emphasis of the characteristics and for all three sub parts of the question tended to focus on more internal aspects of software quality. Very few candidates gained maximum possible marks i) Functionality in the standard is concerned with the suitability to the user in the operational context of the software. Most attempts showed a reasonable understanding of this aspect ii) Reliability in the standard is concerned with how well the software actually performs. Many candidates focused on the reliability of code functioning correctly and subsequently lost marks iii) Portability was reasonably well answered although many answers neglected the ability to co-exist with other software in sharing resources as being a central aim of portability b)

	i) Many answers failed to show an understanding of the role of document review in the quality checking process. Answers tended to focus on a single aspect of the process. Few answers showed the process as being carried out by people other than the author of the document and its central purpose as an auditing method ii) Very few answers showed a proper grasp of the inspection process as a quality check. In many cases answers erroneously suggested that the inspection shows up problems and issues that are then rectified. Answers that indicated the inspection simply highlights deficiencies to the author gained fuller marks. c) i) This part of the question on dynamic testing required an explanation of unit testing. Only a minority of answers correctly identified it as being done by the code writer and was concerned with testing the code against the design documentation. Many answers wrongly suggested that the unit test was carried out by decomposing the fully operation system into its component parts to check on its correctness. ii) This part of the question concerned system testing. Answers that identified the test context (on the target platform) and provided an instance of the test use such as checking response time against the expected times from the requirements document (or other similar instances) would gain full marks. Some answers incorrectly suggested that the system test was an extension of unit and modular testing in the development process .
B6	**Syllabus mapping: 1, 1.2, 1.4 & 1.6**
	a) Many candidates gave full descriptions of three methods used in requirements gathering for a development project. Some answers suggested that the use of project management techniques often used in planning/forecasting the schedules of a project (such as Delphi methods) could be used in the requirements gathering phase. Estimating tools would not be regarded as suitable ways to gather the requirements for development. b) This question required the description of two development process models. It was evident in many answers that candidates had some confusion between both models and freely interchanged descriptions of both models in each answer. i) Incremental development. Very few answers mentioned the possible use of parallel teams using increments of a project for development or the focus of quick delivery of subsets of functionality that can be of immediate use to a client. ii) Iterative development. The focus here is on how the process model is used in situations such as incomplete requirements and the use of techniques such as prototyping would help to firm up requirements. The essential feature of the process involving continuous iterations to try to achieve a final version was recognised in many answers, but few answers gave further extensions and subsequently gained lower marks. c) Most candidates gave good comprehensive answers to explain the agile approach to development. The use of scrums sprints and backlogs was used in many explanations to provide good comprehensive answers. However, many candidates either ignored the part of the question requiring two disadvantages or in many cases only provided a single disadvantage, such as large projects requiring to be split amongst teams or problems of integration with legacy systems.