

BCS Higher Education Qualification

Diploma

October 2022

EXAMINERS' REPORT TEMPLATE

Professional Issues

General comments

There were some very good answers that demonstrated an appropriate understanding of the issues. Overall, this session has seen some improvement in the preparation and exam techniques for candidates. However, there are still candidates who do not demonstrate an appropriate level of understanding of the range of topics on the paper.

We encourage all candidates to spend time preparing ahead of the paper, making use of Training Centres where such centres are available in the countries. It is helpful to review past papers and examiners' reports from recent years as part of the preparation but more importantly to be familiar with the syllabus. part of the studies for the modules, candidates should also look at the recommended reading for the module.

We note that for the past few sessions, fewer candidates have shown detailed knowledge of the Finance and Management Accounting topics. These are topics where candidates could improve their knowledge whilst preparing for the whole syllabus.

Some candidates could improve their answers by looking at the weighting for each part of the question. There are still some answers where we see short answers for the larger part of a question and longer answers for the smaller parts of a question. This will limit the potential marks that a candidate might achieve. The examiners have seen some improvement in this issue this year, but more candidates should consider this as they prepare for the examination.

There have been several changes to legislation and business practices in recent years. To support teaching by training centres and learning by candidates, BCS has published the 3rd edition of the Professional Issues in IT book, in September 2022.

Questions Report:

A1	Syllabus Area: Professional Institutions and Professional Codes of Conduct 1.3 & Human Resources Management 8.2
	This question was answered by many candidates. Part a) was about the Code of Conduct. It was answered reasonably well, with candidates showing some understanding of parts of the contents of the Code. Some candidates were not able to describe the purpose of the code. Part b) was generally answered rather poorly, with candidates showing limited awareness of the concept of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and the ways in which BCS encourages and supports CPD for its members (e.g. IT Now, Branches, Special Interest Groups and SFIA plus).
A2	Syllabus Area: Organisations and their structure 2.1
	This question was answered by many candidates. Part a) asked about advantages of a limited company. Candidates were generally able to identify some advantages, but some descriptions were brief. Part b) asked about the principles that are fundamental to the concept of a limited liability company. There were some good answers covering at least two of the requested three principles, but some answers repeated issues in different ways and some were brief.
A3	Syllabus Area: Human Resources Management 8.1, 8.3 & 8.5
	This question was answered by many candidates. Part a) was about different types of psychometric tests. Some candidates were able to identify the general types (ability, aptitude, and personality) but couldn't describe what these tests would involve. Some candidates incorrectly discussed other issues of recruitment and selection, e.g. interviews. Part b) Some candidates showed an understanding of what Constructive Dismissal was, but several candidates had limited awareness of the topic. Some candidates incorrectly suggested that Constructive Dismissal is where the employee was fired for misconduct. Instead, the discussion should have considered the problems with an employer's actions.
B4	Syllabus Area: Management Accounting 4.1 & 4.2
	This question was answered by fewer candidates. Part a) asked about some definitions and many candidates had limited awareness of the concepts of goodwill and overheads. Part b) asked candidates to prepare a cashflow statement. Whilst there was some understanding of the issues in adjusting figures over time, several candidates were not able to prepare a statement.
B5	Syllabus Area: Intellectual Property 6.1
	This question was answered by many candidates. Part a) asked about Copyright and Trademarks. The candidates were generally able to discuss some issues about the topics, but several answers did not compare them or relate the discussion to the use of these topics by a software company. Part b) asked about the use of a Patent by a company for a new product. Many answers could comment on the main ideas of a patent, with some very good responses. Several answers did not expand that discussion to how that could provide protection for the company in the question.
B6	Syllabus Area: Legal obligations, 5.1 and Online Working, 7.2.
	This question was answered by many candidates. Part a) was about cookies and data protection. There were some good answers, but other answers were more general and focused on reciting parts of the data protection legislation without referring the situation in the question. Part b) asked about technical and organisational measures for data protection. Many answers could comment on technical matters, but fewer answers discussed organisational matters (e.g. who has access to data?; how long is data kept?; responsibilities of people in the organization regarding data security), Part c) asked about the data controller. Answers could often outline what the controller is but could have provided some more details.

