

BCS Higher Education Qualification

Diploma

Spring 2020

EXAMINERS' REPORT

Professional Issues in Information Systems Practice

General comments

Due to the current global situation, very few candidates were able to attend the exams, however, the standard of those who did attend is satisfactory overall. With those who failed, there are recurring problems similar to those of previous papers in that answers were not structured in accordance with the question and the students needed a more in-depth approach.

A video has been produced to support learners for this module. It is recommended for all candidates on the module to understand the range of topics and the example answers.

Answers regarding legal issues and intellectual property were often short. Candidates are encouraged to provide more description and discussion rather than a set of bullet points.

Some candidates are relying on general knowledge. We encourage everyone to review the recommended texts as preparation for the examination. Please focus answers on what was asked rather than just a general set of points related to the topic.

Question number: 1

Syllabus area: Professional Institutions, 1.2 and Professional Codes of Conduct 8.1

Total marks allocated: 25

Examiners' Guidance Notes

There were some good answers, but often the answers focused on general points about what a University does, rather than specifically addressing the issue of accreditation.

In two cases, more examples were given than the question asked for – possibly limiting time available to answer other parts of the paper.

Answers regarding the BCS Code of Conduct were better overall.

Question number: 2

Syllabus area: Human Resources, 9.3

Total marks allocated: 25

Examiners' Guidance Notes

The first part of the question asked about the responsibilities for HR departments in UK organisations. A number of the answers identified relevant responsibilities – the answers could be improved with some more description of the items.

When asked about selection techniques when appointing someone for a job, some candidates offered general ideas that were really about advertising the role and not selecting who should be appointed. Those candidates who did describe selection techniques generally offered a good explanation.

Question number: 3

Syllabus area: Organisations and their Structure, 2.1

Total marks allocated: 25

Examiners' Guidance Notes

This question asked about different issues of organisations, focusing on private limited companies, public companies and partnerships. There was good awareness of private limited companies, although some answers did not understand that 'limited' refers to limited liability. The answers about partnerships were good on the whole, although some points were general and could be more focused on the question.

Question number: 4

Syllabus area: Finance, 3.1

Total marks allocated: 25

Examiners' Guidance Notes

This question asked about cash flow, depreciation and assets. The answers for cash flow showed an understanding of the issues but a few answers didn't understand how to use all of the figures presented in the question. The answers for depreciation were good; some could have been more detailed. Answers for assets were OK, but general.

Question number: 5

Syllabus area: Legal Obligations, 5.1

Total marks allocated: 25

Examiners' Guidance Notes

There were a few good answers. Other answers demonstrated a limited understanding of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act. Answers about the Computer Misuse Act showed some awareness, but the answers were brief and did not always consider the details in the question.

Question number: 6
Syllabus area: Legal Obligations, 5.2 and Intellectual Property, 6.1
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
Part a) asked about the UK's Freedom of Information Act and how it applied to a situation. Whilst there were some good answers, there were answers where the candidates did not understand what it was. Some candidates confused this for the Data Protection Act. Part b) asked about the Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act and how it applied to a scenario. Whilst some relevant points were described, a number of candidates wrote brief answers that did not provide details and did not discuss how the Act applies in the scenario.