BCS Higher Education Qualification

Profession Graduate Diploma

March 2019

EXAMINERS' REPORT

Web Engineering

General comments[1]
The comments from previous examiners' reports are still valid. As in previous years, there remains a large disparity between well-prepared candidates and those who were not ready to sit this examination. One new comment worth mentioning is that, after marking all part A, it's been noticed that some candidates overlooked some parts of the questions. For example, they answer the question without providing an example(s) when needed in the question. This leads to losing some marks as the question is not fully answered. A general comment about the questions which require coding is that it appears that candidates are not prepared or not ready to answer such questions. They are answer better in HTML compared to PHP. Part B showed clear signs of the candidates being stretched for time, particularly for B5. The requirement to write several extended examples of complete XML was clearly challenging in the time available.

Question number: A1
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
This question was attempted by most candidates. There was some disparity in the quality of answers and marks for the whole question. The candidates were open in their response to Question A1.b.1 when explaining an effective method to prevent from the server-side security risks. They were also open in A1.b.2. Most candidates were able to answer part (a), (b) and (c). For Part (c), some candidates used a table to list the strength and weaknesses. This helped to order the points made and prevented candidates losing the flow of points.

Question number: A2
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
This question was attempted around two thirds of candidates. There was a wide range in the quality of answers and marks for the whole question. Some candidates gained less than (5), other candidates obtained nearly full marks. The pass rate was less than A1. The question requires knowledge of coding, and some candidates were unable to follow the instructions. There was a wide disparity at the sub-question level. Some candidates left some parts blank which obviously impacted on their overall mark. In general, candidates were more proficient in HTML than in any of the programming languages.

Question number: A3
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
This question was attempted by approximately half of the candidates making it the least popular of the part A questions. The pass rate was high. Again, there was a wide disparity in the quality of answers and marks for the whole question. The sub-question (A3.a.i) was relatively straightforward and therefore most of the candidates answered it well. However, some did not use examples and this was repeated in part b).

Question number: B4
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
This question was attempted by most candidates and the majority passed. Part a) was answered well with the majority of marks being lost for describing the same factor in several different ways. Part b) required the candidate to follow the brackets. Part c) was answered correctly by almost all candidates. Part d) required candidates to provide the right qualifiers to enforce the conditions – several did not. Part e) required candidates to add an optional element to the specifications of Magazine and Article and to add the necessary attributes. Problems occurred when candidates tried to control the constraint at the lower level, rather than at Magazine and Article.

Question number: B5
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
Relatively few candidates answered this question and those that did showed severe signs of time pressure. Parts a) and b) were straightforward for those that understood the principles being examined. Part c) required the candidates to give two examples where it is necessary to convert XML into JSON. Examples were where information from two sources have to be merged for presentation and simplifying data for presentation on less capable devices such as mobile. The code given was a simple transformation. Part d) required care with the loops to ensure that the data is presented in the right order. There were also issues with the construction of the select statements to ensure that the actual data was selected, rather than the names of the ids. The use of templates was also not properly understood. Most were declared, but few were applied. The issues with part e) were similar to part d).