BCS Higher Education Qualification

Profession Graduate Diploma

22 December

EXAMINERS' REPORT

Network Information Systems

General comments
Section A Although the number of candidates was low, there were a range of responses to questions and some answers were of a very high standard, and although the numbers were too low to draw inferences, the standard appeared to be high in that the majority of the candidates who sat the exam appeared well prepared. Most candidates answered both question A1 and A2.

Question number: A1
Syllabus area: SECTION 1 - ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DISTRIBUTED PROCESSING SYSTEMS
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners Comments Most answers to part A and B were excellent, showing good understanding of the topologies and good preparation by candidates. Many candidates also understood and were able to speak to the problem part concerning running TCP/IP over the architectures although in general this part was more testing of candidates and answers did not always consider all the factors at play or perhaps had little knowledge of these other protocols. Knowledge of the protocols was not required to achieve good answers if candidates recognised the way that network architecture is abstracted away in TCP/IP.

Question number: A2
Syllabus area: SECTION 8 - MESSAGING AND INFORMATION SERVICES
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners Comments
Almost no candidates mentioned ISO-17799, but the majority who attempted this question had a good understanding of the CIA triad. Nevertheless there were some answers that provided little more than the plain English meaning of the words as opposed to the definitions found in the standards. Again there were a range of answers on the question of encryption. Almost all candidates understood that asymmetric encryption is duel key, but the description of these keys was variable, and several answers spoke of sharing private keys. Almost no answers mentioned that these keys are paired, with information encrypted by one key only able to be decrypted by the other and vice versa. Understanding and expressing this concept in an answer is important to gain full marks in a question. Many candidates opted to leave part c blank or provided superficial answers. Some answers on this point were very good.

Question number: B3
Syllabus area: Section 5 - LOCAL AND WIDE AREA NETWORKS
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
Examiners Comments Comment: This question has been attempted by nearly every candidate in Part 2. The scoring has been high –there is good understanding of the material because the emphasis of the preparation for the exam addressed the issues which can be found in our everyday lives. The question proved easy to relate to – but it is essential in the understanding the work of the modern work from home environment.

Question number: B4
Syllabus area: SECTION 8 - MESSAGING AND INFORMATION SERVICES
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
Examiners Comments Only two of the twelve candidates answered this question with results less successful than B3. Nevertheless the answers were marked high. It looks like not a lot of preparation goes into this material, but it is essential for the candidates to understand how REST services and the protocols linked to REST (e.g. SOAP etc.) work.

Question number: B5
Syllabus area: SECTION 3 - OPERATIONAL NETWORK/NIS MANAGEMENT ISSUES
Total marks allocated: 25
Examiners' Guidance Notes
Examiners Comments Another question which was chosen only two times by the candidates. The answers proven to be difficult for the candidates especially on part B5_b. Part B5_c was answered correctly, but general understanding of how to make use of VPN is low.