

BCS Higher Education Qualification

Diploma

April 2025

EXAMINERS' REPORT

Software Engineering

Questions Report:

A1	
	<p>This question was attempted by almost all candidates with a disappointingly low average mark.</p> <p>After clearly stating the nature of software as opposed to hardware etc. the aim was for candidates to clearly identify the different characteristics of various classes of software. The expectation was that they would choose system and application software and firmware although other clearly differentiated classes were acceptable so long as that differentiation was made clear.</p>
A2	
	<p>This question was attempted by about two thirds of candidates who overall attained an acceptable average mark.</p> <p>The choice of ambiguities was interesting and some either overlapped or would probably be part of subsidiary systems (such as the handling of credit card details). Marks were lost because of lack of detail. Again, it was lack of detail which lost marks in discussing functional requirements. Few candidates clearly related their answers to the scenario.</p>
A3	
	<p>This was chosen by only a third of candidates with very poor average marks.</p> <p>The modelling part did not give sufficient detail for the examples chosen and the sequence diagram varied between far too complex and too sparse. The description in the question gives all the information needed to complete the diagram, without adding further complication or actors.</p>
B4	
	<p>Three quarters of candidates attempted this question with an acceptable average mark. There seemed to be some reluctance to give clear concrete answers to why different types of software maintenance often overlap.</p> <p>Parts b and c are in fact significantly different scenarios, but many candidates muddled them and therefore provided the same answer twice.</p>
B5	
	<p>This question was answered by just over half of candidates of which only three quarters passed. The average was acceptable. There was a moderate understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of source control systems but the need for adaptors caused some serious problems. The need for customised linkages to handle both formatting and data structure issues was not well articulated.</p>

B6	
	<p>This question was answered by about three quarters of candidates with 80% of them passing. The average was at the lower end of the acceptable range.</p> <p>None of the candidates recognised that even if every test is passed there is always the possibility of a further test failing as computer systems can never be completely defined. This led to some confused answers. Involving users in testing was better answered although it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between advantages and disadvantages. Users need to be carefully managed to keep them to the testing brief otherwise mission creep will inevitably occur.</p>