

## Unit 5: Problem Solving Using ICT – Glossary

Term	Definition
Decision Support Systems (DSS)	Refined MIS systems where the emphasis is on providing senior management with key information for strategic decision-making. DSS use sophisticated analysis techniques and can include expert systems.
Expert systems	An application of artificial intelligence to a particular area of activity where traditional human expert knowledge and experience are available through computer software.
Executive Information Systems (EIS)	EIS support the strategic level within an organisation. They provide support and guidance needed to carry out long-term forecasting and planning. EIS use data and information collected from the current environment to establish trends or anomalies that can then be used for future planning. (Also known as ESS – Executive Support systems.)
Environment	The surroundings in which the system under development exists.
Operational Information	This lies at the bottom of the information gathering process. Typical information used at this level will be the number of units sold of any item in a store or the overtime hours worked by staff in a given department.
Strategic Information	Used by top-level management in making decisions that will affect the whole organisation and its future. These decisions tend to be long term and involve high levels of expenditure. The decisions may include issues like investment, foreign trade and expansion of the organisation. Strategic information is very closely linked with strategic planning.
System Boundary	The boundary which defines the extent of a system. Inside the boundary are all the things and activities which are perceived as part of the system; outside is the system environment. The system will affect/ influence/ be affected by/ be influenced by the objects in its environment. A way of determining a sensible conceptual boundary for a system is to include within the boundary all activities, objects, resources, etc. over which the system has complete control, and include in the environment of the system all activities, objects, resources, etc. which influence the system, or which the system influences, but which are not entirely under its control. Only consider objects in the environment that are of significance to the system under discussion.
Tactical Information	Used in the day-to-day running of an organisation and the decisions that have to be made by middle management. These decisions will be based upon information that comes up through an organisation, as well as information that comes into the organisation from outside sources.
Total Quality Management (TQM)	A quality assurance principle which involves the process of quality management being passed down through all levels of an organisation / business, all staff are involved in the quality process.