



The Professional Association for IS Professionals

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## HIGHER DIPLOMA

# INFORMATION SYSTEMS STRATEGY (H2)

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013

TIME: 10:00 TO 13:00 HOURS

DURATION: 3 HOURS

Candidates should answer ALL the questions in part A and THREE of the five questions in Part B. Part A carries 40% of the marks available and Part B carries 60%. Candidates should allocate their time accordingly. You are advised to spend approximately 40% of your time on section A and 60% on section B.

*No reference material of any kind may be taken into the examination.*

[Turn over]

**PART A.**  
**Answer ALL questions in this section**

**Question A1.**

Describe or draw the 'business diamond' as a framework for understanding the design of an organisation. ( 5 marks)

**Question A2.**

A product repair company is aiming to speed up the processing of repairs to benefit its customers. Explain how the application of IS may achieve this and the effect it may have on other parts of the firm's value chain. ( 5 marks)

**Question A3.**

Define a 'knowledge map' and describe FOUR classifications of knowledge. ( 5 marks)

**Question A4.**

The control of information is crucial in four areas summarised by the abbreviation PAPA. State the meaning of this term and briefly describe each of its four elements. ( 5 marks)

**Question A5.**

Describe the term 'business intelligence' and the subset of this area known as 'business analytics'. ( 5 marks)

**Question A6.**

Describe FIVE of the responsibilities of a Chief Information Officer (CIO). ( 5 marks)

**Question A7.**

What factors contribute to good 'IT governance'? ( 5 marks)

**Question A8.**

Describe FIVE drivers for the formation of 'virtual teams'. ( 5 marks)

(Total 40 marks)  
**[Turn over]**

**PART B.**

**Answer any THREE of the five questions in this section**

**Question B9.**

D'Aveni has suggested a framework of seven approaches that an organisation can take in its business strategy, known as the 7 S's.

- a). Describe in general terms the how this approach can be useful to a business and suggest the type of markets where it might be especially applicable. **(10 marks)**
  - b). One of the 7 S's is "Positioning for speed". Describe an example of how a business might do this. **( 2 marks)**
  - c). Identify FOUR other of Aveni's 7 S's and briefly explain their meanings. **( 8 marks)**
- (Total 20 marks)**

**Question B10.**

- a). Define the terms 'tacit knowledge' and 'explicit knowledge', giving two examples of each. **( 6 marks)**
  - b). Briefly explain the importance of 'knowledge management'. **( 2 marks)**
  - c). There are several trends that make it increasingly important for businesses to manage knowledge in order to maintain competitive advantage. Explain THREE of these trends. **(12 marks)**
- (Total 20 marks)**

**Question B11.**

A company can choose different organisational structures for managing its IT/IS resource.

- a). Outline FIVE advantages of a centralised approach. **(5 marks)**
  - b). Outline FIVE advantages of a decentralised approach. **(5 marks)**
  - c). Explain why an organisation of a certain type may prefer a centralised approach. **(5 marks)**
  - d). Briefly explain what is meant by a 'federal' approach to resource organisation. **(5 marks)**
- (Total 20 marks)**

**[Turn over]**

**Question B12.**

- a). What is meant by 'cloud computing'? (5 marks)
  - b). Describe an example of a particular processing requirement that might be best handled by the use of cloud computing. (5 marks)
  - c). What in general is the business case for using cloud computing? (10 marks)
- (Total 20 marks)

**Question B13.**

- a). Identify Porter's five major forces that shape the competitive environment of a business. (5 marks)
  - b). Using an example business of your choice, describe how the application of IT influences each of these five competitive forces. (15 marks)
- (Total 20 marks)

**END OF EXAMINATION**