THE BRITISH COMPUTER SOCIETY

THE BCS PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION
Professional Graduate Diploma

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

28th April 2003, 2.30 p.m.-5.30 p.m.
Answer THREE questions out of FIVE. All questions carry equal marks.
Time: THREE hours.

*The marks given in brackets are **indicative** of the weight given to each part of the question.*

1. At the Board meeting of a large organisation, the Finance Director has formally proposed that to improve service and reduce costs the organisation should outsource all IS functions, including future IS strategy. The IS Director accepts some of the arguments for outsourcing but strongly disagrees that all functions be outsourced, particularly the IS strategy which he believes must remain within the organisation. The Board remains unconvinced by both arguments and seeks assistance.

    a)   Describe the advantages and disadvantages of outsourcing all IS functions.

    (10 marks)

    b)   Discuss the implications of outsourcing just the computer operations function of IS.

    (5 marks)

    c)   Evaluate the arguments for and against outsourcing IS strategy.   **(10 marks)**

2. A mail order wine company has expanded its business by mailing details of special offers to customers and by using a call centre to telephone customers and to send mobile telephone text messages. When a customer telephones with an order, call centre staff are paid commission to make further sales and special discounts can be applied if the customer immediately places a further order. Whilst this approach has been successful in increasing sales, poor record keeping by staff has resulted in errors.

    a)   Describe a type of application package solution that could collect, manage and store details of the various communications made with customers.   **(5 marks)**

    b)   Discuss the possible implications that the use of this package would have on other systems that store customer information.   **(10 marks)**

    c)   Describe the management information that could be provided by such a package and outline how it could be used.   **(10 marks)**

3. The Minister responsible for a government department is concerned by the increasing number of failed high profile MIS projects.

    a)   Explain how the risks inherent in a large MIS development project could be minimised.   **(15 marks)**

    b)   Using examples, explain why cost benefit analysis may be inappropriate for large MIS projects.

    (10 marks)

4. Describe each of the following IS development concepts and discuss its usefulness for MIS development.

    a)   Evolutionary development approach   **(6 marks)**
    b)   Object-oriented methodology   **(6 marks)**
    c)   CASE tool   **(6 marks)**
    d)   End-User Computing (EUC)   **(7 marks)**

5. Your organisation is considering the implementation of an Intranet through which the corporate Executive Information System (EIS) and several Decision Support Systems (DSS) will be made available.

    a)   Describe the principal features of:
          i)   an EIS
          ii) a DSS

                                                           (12 marks)

    b)   Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of an **Intranet-based** MIS provision.

                                                          (13 marks)