

COURSE CODE BA112 (M) 2007

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER 2007

YEAR OF STUDY: D.COM (YEAR 1/IDE YEAR 2)

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COMPUTING

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. This paper consists of section A and B.**
- 2. The case study question – Section A, is compulsory.**
- 3. Answer any two questions from section B.**

NOTE: Marks will be awarded for good communication in English and for orderly presentation of work.

This examination paper should not be opened until permission has been granted by the invigilator.

SECTION A (COMPULSORY)

(Read the case and answer the questions that follow).

You have been approached by the Head teacher of your local Secondary School, after getting to know that you're a student of the University of Swaziland. He has several problems, which he believes can be sorted out by computerising and asks you to give him some advice.

The first problem he's complaining about is too many correspondence documents that he has to type to staff, students and parents. He says his secretary spends 80% of her time typing and filing these documents. In most cases, the correspondence letters are the same in terms of content.

His other big challenge is the keeping of student continuous assessment records. There are too many calculations that have to be done in each student record. On top of that he has had too many disputes by students complaining about some computation mistakes made by the teachers. Such complaints have also been reported to the school's governing body and some disciplinary measures are underway. Besides, the keeping of the continuous assessment records, he's also having a challenge keeping an up-to-date database of his students. He says, now and then he's called by the Ministry of Education that require information about the number of students in certain categories. He made an example, where the ministry was asking him about the numbers of males against female students, the number of orphans at his school and the number of students that had dropped out during the first two terms. He says he was so embarrassed not to have ready answers to all these questions.

Hearing that you've just completed first year at the University of Swaziland and that you've bought a computer, he comes to you one afternoon for some advice. His school has never had a computer and he thinks his problems can be better managed by computerising.

Questions

- (a) From the above case, what are the problems faced by the head teacher that can be resolved by computerising? Categorise them and state, which software application is likely to solve each of the head teacher's problems. (20 marks)
- (b) What type of computer hardware can you advise the head teacher to purchase? In the purchasing process, what acquisition issues can you advise the head teacher to take into account. (20 marks)
- (c) The head teacher has also raised a concern about losing of correspondence letters, especially in his filing. What can you advise the head teacher on that aspect, especially if he goes the computerisation route? (10 marks)

SECTION B

Answer any **two** Questions from this section.

Question 1

Discuss each of the following:

- (a) Online processing (5 marks)
- (b) Batch processing (5 marks)
- (c) Hardware (5 marks)
- (d) Task switching (5 marks)
- (e) The parts of the CPU (5 marks)

Question 2

- (a) Describe the four processes/operations that are necessary to transfer data from a direct access storage device to main memory. (10 marks)
- (b) What does downsizing mean in terms of computer hardware? (5 marks)
- (c) Briefly describe three types of computer systems. (10 marks)

Question 3

- (a) What is the difference between an assembler, compiler, and interpreter? (9 marks)
- (b) What are the major factors to consider when selecting application software? (10 marks)
- (c) List and briefly describe three classifications of operating system. (6 marks)

Question 4

- (a) Explain the difference between horizontally compatible and vertically compatible software. What advantages might each type of software offer a manager? (7 marks)
- (b) What is the difference between primary storage and secondary storage? Which is usually faster to access? (10 marks)
- (c) What is EDI? What advantages might a large buyer gain from developing an EDI system with its major suppliers? (8 marks)