Unit:
Information Systems and Organisations

Assignment title:
Strategic Report on Airline Merger

December 2017

Marking Scheme

Markers are advised that, unless a task specifies that an answer be provided in a particular form, then an answer that is correct (factually or in practical terms) **must** be given the available marks. If there is doubt as to the correctness of an answer, the relevant NCC Education materials should be the first authority.

This marking scheme has been prepared as a **guide only** to markers and there will frequently be many alternative responses which will provide a valid answer.

Each candidate's script must be fully annotated with the marker's comments (where applicable) and the marks allocated for each part of the tasks.

Throughout the marking, please credit any valid alternative point.

Where markers award half marks in any part of a task, they should ensure that the total mark recorded for the task is rounded up to a whole mark.

Marker's comments:

Moderator's comments:

Mark:	Moderated mark:	Final mark:

Penalties applied for academic malpractice:

Task	Guide	Maximum marks
1	**Write a short report, convincing the Board of Directors of CA that they need to make changes to become more like a 21st century organisation.** **In particular the document should address:** • **The characteristics of a 21st century organisation** • **Types of information systems required** • **The impact of these on these on the organisational structures and working practices** • **Overall benefits to the organisation** A typical report, approx. 800 words in length, would include the following: • Characteristics of a 21st century organisation: flatter structures, flexible working schedules, distance working, hot desking, automation, using latest communication and mobile technologies. • Suggestions for the types of information systems required to be a 21st century organisation, for example, implementing CRM, customer profiling, new/better systems for online transactions/support; • Valid arguments to suggest that these IS can lead to changes in the structure and working practices e.g. making the structure more flat and transparent and changing practices so that there are flexible hours of working, remote working and better communication flows • Linking up the above changes to suggest that such changes will result in CA becoming more technology oriented, open, responsive and better managed; with better information flows and efficient decision making as well as strategic management.	4 5 6 5 _____ 20
2	**There are many information systems (IS) in the CA portfolio that are either legacy or stand alone. Thus, there is much inefficiency present in the portfolio.** a) **Provide TWO (2) examples of typical legacy/standalone IS that you would expect to exist already in CA, clearly explaining their purpose in the organisation. (6 marks)**	

		b) **Explain why these legacy/standalone IS may be regarded as inefficient and not very effective. (6 marks)** c) **Suggest how Enterprise Applications Integration (EAI) and a balanced portfolio can prove advantageous for organisation's IS. (8 marks)** A typical report/answer, approx. 800 words in length, would include the following: a) Legacy systems being those developed a long time ago using older/inefficient methods of development and remaining unchanged; stand-alone system being those that have no or limited interaction with other IS. Therefore CA are likely to have existing IS such as payroll systems or stock control. Two IS should be discussed and their roles explained.	6
		b) Suggestions with sound rationale that such IS are inherently inefficient and less effective (due to inefficient methods of development, lack of proper design, use of inappropriate tools/technology when developing and testing, spaghetti-like structures, duplication of data and functionality, slowness of execution, etc.).	6
		c) Award 2 marks for explaining what EAI refers to (i.e. a method of seamless integration of applications and functionalities) and a further 3 marks each for explaining the benefits of EAI and a balanced portfolio. EAI benefits include reusing, less or no duplication of data/functionality, seamless information flow from one application to another, less human interaction and thus reduced human errors. A balanced portfolio can promote efficiencies (e.g. removal of duplication of functions and data, removal of unwanted functionality, better linkages with IS, etc.).	8
			20
3	**If CA were to replace some of their stand-alone and legacy systems, they would need guidance on the best ways to develop or acquire and implement new information systems (IS).** **Write a short report that discusses the various approaches to developing or acquiring, and implementing a new IS. Also provide recommendations for the best approaches for CA to follow.**	

	A typical report/answer, approx. 800 words in length, would include the following:	
	• Generally accepted approaches to developing or acquiring a new IS: developing in-house vs development by a software house vs purchasing off the shelf vs leasing from a vendor.	2
	• Description and discussion of merits, disadvantages and limitations of the said approaches. Discussion to include factors such as: 1) developing in-house assumes in-house expertise, takes time, but is relatively inexpensive and conforms to organisational requirements; 2) getting it built also takes time and is more expensive however will be well tested and conforming to requirements; 3) off the shelf IS is available instantly but may not conform fully to requirements; and 4) leasing will make the IS available straight away but may not conform fully to requirements may not fully conform to requirements however lease can be terminated as and when required.	8
	• Generally accepted implementation strategies: direct switchover (new IS instantly available), parallel (both IS running in parallel for certain period of time), and phased that is implementation is stages.	2
	• Discussion, description, merits, disadvantages and limitations of the said approaches.	6
	• Suggesting the best approaches, including rationale for the choice (e.g. commissioning a software house to develop so that the system conforms to organisational requirements; and using parallel implementation so that testing can be monitored during the implementation stage).	2
		20
4	**There are noticeable differences in the *management style* and *hierarchical structures* of BT and CA. The BT staff fear that, after the merger, there might be significant changes to these, altering their working environment.** **Discuss the possible changes to the methods of *management and control* and any *structural* changes that may occur, highlighting any negative effects this could have on staff morale.** **Additionally, suggest how information systems and the latest technologies can help with any required staff training following the merger.**	

	A typical report/answer, approx. 800 words in length, would include the following:	
	• Understanding of the terms *management style* and *hierarchical structures*.	2
	• Examples of how *management control* and *structural changes* might change including rationale for changes (e.g. manner of management that may be less democratic; structural changes to align with the organisational structure of CA which is too rigid; communication flows that are less transparent; restrictions on flexibility of work practices; stricter environment due to the autocratic ways of CA; etc.).	6
	• Discussion on detrimental effects on staff morale may include: dislike of new management approaches because of autocratic management; dislike of new work practices that are regarded as too restrictive; feelings of unwontedness due to disregard of peoples' expertise, feeling of deskilling due to lack of due recognition; and a general feeling to stepping backwards rather than moving forward	6
	• Discussion of how latest IS and technologies may help with the necessary training may include: use of online training packages; automation of practice sessions; social media fora for peer teaching and learning; use of technology to reduce manual processes; etc.).	6
		20
5	**Enterprise Systems (ES) within CA are mainly for the use by data centre personnel within the organisation. Customer interaction with the ES is rather limited.** **Discuss how the ES could be developed to improve user acceptance through human computer interaction (HCI) and highlight any benefits that might result.** A typical answer, approx. 800 words in length, would include the following:	
	• Characteristics of a good human computer interaction (HCI) based of Neilson's or other well-known principles. Discussion on the importance of having a good HCI built within enterprise systems.	6
	• Discussion on how enterprise systems may be developed to have better HCI – including explanation of, and comparison between, the commonly used approaches (e.g. software reengineering, looking at exiting HCI and reengineering only relevant parts of the relevant ES, upgrading inefficient legacy systems, leasing better ES to replace some older systems as a short	7

		term solution, etc.). Suggestions may include soliciting users for feedback on the usability of existing HCI before initiating updating of ES	
		• Discussion on benefits (ideally at least 4-5) of a useable human computer interaction brings (e.g. ease of use and so more use by customers, customer satisfaction, confidence and trust, flexibility and more control, more business resulting from these).	7
			20

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Learning Outcomes matrix

Task	Learning Outcomes assessed	Marker can differentiate between varying levels of achievement
1	1, 2, 4	Yes
2	3	Yes
3	6	Yes
4	4	Yes
5	5	Yes

Grade descriptors

Learning Outcome	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Analyse the use of Information Systems (IS) within organisations	Demonstrate adequate ability to analyse the topic	Demonstrate ability to provide detailed and coherent analysis of the topic	Demonstrate ability to provide comprehensive, lucid analysis of the topic
Examine the many internal and external uses of an organisation's IS	Provide examination of the subject with some suitable examples and references	Provide detailed examination of the subject with adequate use of appropriate references and examples	Provide consistently critical and detailed examination of the subject with innovative use of highly appropriate references
Critically evaluate the costs and benefits of a range of IS systems	Provide a reasonable assessment of the subject; Ideas are generally coherent and demonstrate some sound critical skills	Provide a generally strong assessment with some well-reasoned assumptions; Ideas are consistently coherent; Demonstrate consistently sound critical skills	Provide a consistently strong assessment with well-reasoned and original assumptions; All ideas are highly coherent; Demonstrate highly developed critical skills
Critically evaluate the cultural, structural and political aspects of IS	Provide a reasonable assessment of the subject; Ideas are generally coherent and demonstrate some sound critical skills	Provide a generally strong assessment with some well-reasoned assumptions; Ideas are consistently coherent; Demonstrate consistently sound critical skills	Provide a consistently strong assessment with well-reasoned and original assumptions; All ideas are highly coherent; Demonstrate highly developed critical skills

Examine the issues associated with human interaction with IS	Provide examination of the subject with some suitable examples and references	Provide detailed examination of the subject with adequate use of appropriate references and examples	Provide consistently critical and detailed examination of the subject with innovative use of highly appropriate references
Assess the effects of technological change on IS and the organisations	Demonstrate an adequate awareness of issues associated with the subject and make some appropriate judgements	Demonstrate a sound awareness of issues associated with the subject and make consistently appropriate judgements	Demonstrate a detailed awareness of the complexity of issues associated with the subject and make highly appropriate judgements