QUESTION 2

(a)

Choosing the right web hosting service is essential to ensure that the school's website is reliable, accessible, secure, and cost-effective. The following steps should be followed to identify the most suitable hosting service:

1. Define Website Requirements

Before selecting a hosting service, it is important to identify the website’s needs:

* Type of website: Informational, with several static pages (home, academics, admissions, contact).
* Estimated traffic: Likely low to medium, mostly local users.
* Technical features needed: HTML/CSS support, form handling, and downloadable documents.  
  This helps narrow down hosting platforms that support lightweight, educational websites.

2. Prioritize Free or Budget-Friendly Options

Since the school likely has limited resources, choosing a free or low-cost hosting service is ideal. Suitable options include:

* GitHub Pages (great for static HTML/CSS sites)
* Netlify (easy to deploy, supports contact forms)

These options support essential school functions without extra financial burden.

3. Evaluate Ease of Use and Setup

The chosen service should be easy for a beginner or school IT team to manage. Key considerations:

* Does it offer a simple upload system or drag-and-drop interface?
* Is there support for automatic deployment from platforms like GitHub?
* Can staff members be trained quickly to update the site?

4. Check Domain Name Support

The hosting service should allow connection to a custom domain like www.hosannasecschool.ac.ug.  
If not available for free, the school should register a domain separately and ensure the host allows domain linking.

5. Review Performance and Uptime Reliability

The host should provide:

* Fast loading times so users don’t wait long.
* 99%+ uptime guarantees to ensure the website is always accessible.  
  Free hosts may have limitations, so checking user reviews and performance ratings is important.

6. Consider Technical Support and Community Help

Even for a basic website, occasional issues may arise. A good hosting platform should offer:

* Email or chat support (even for free users)
* Documentation, video tutorials, or an active user community

Platforms like Netlify and GitHub Pages have excellent online help.

7. Security Features

The host should provide:

* Free SSL certificate (for HTTPS access)
* Protection from basic malware or spam  
  This is essential to protect the school’s data and earn visitor trust.

8. Future Scalability

If the school later wants to add features (like online results, parent portals, or a blog), the hosting platform should be able to scale or allow migration to more advanced plans easily.

(b)

As a technical expert, I recommend the following cost-effective and impactful techniques that Mr. Mayiga can use to ensure Hosanna Secondary School’s website reaches its intended audience and improves outreach:

1. Share the Website Link on School Documents and Letters

Every official document—such as admission letters, circulars, report cards, and newsletters—should include the website address. This ensures that parents and students are continuously reminded to check the site for updates, boosting traffic and familiarity.

2. Promote on Social Media Platforms

Create official Facebook, WhatsApp, and X (formerly Twitter) pages for the school. Regularly share website updates, academic calendars, admission news, or success stories. Social media is widely used by students and parents. Sharing links drives traffic to the site and increases visibility within the wider community.

3. Use Word of Mouth and School Events

Encourage teachers, administrators, and students to talk about the website during school meetings, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) gatherings, open days, and church announcements. Personal recommendations build trust and ensure even non-tech-savvy parents hear about the website.

4. Display Posters and Banners with the Website Link

Design attractive posters or banners showing the web address and key features for example “Visit us online for admissions & updates!” and place them at the school gate, nearby trading centres, churches, and noticeboards. Visual promotion attracts the attention of both parents and local community members who may not be reached online.

5. Promote Through Local Radio or Community Programs

Mr. Mayiga can request for a short school announcement on local FM stations or community talk shows, especially during school admission seasons.Radio is still one of the most powerful communication tools in rural and semi-urban Uganda. Mentioning the school’s website URL spreads the word fast.

6. Add the Website Link to the School’s WhatsApp Groups

Most schools today have WhatsApp groups for different classes or parents. Posting the website link and encouraging its use boosts awareness. WhatsApp is the most used mobile communication tool among parents and students and can quickly circulate links and updates.

7. Encourage Students to Use and Share the Site

Make website use part of school assignments or announcements for example “Check the website for the term calendar.”. Students can also be encouraged to share the link with relatives or friends. Students are digital natives. Once they understand the site’s benefits, they’ll spread it among peers and family.

8. Include the Website in Email Signatures and School Profiles

All official emails sent from the school should have a signature that includes the web address. Also, update the school’s profile on directories like UNEB, Ministry of Education platforms, and educational listings. This creates a professional image and drives visibility through official and institutional channels.

(c)

To assess whether the school website is achieving its intended goals, Mr. Mayiga and the school administration should evaluate both measurable results and user experiences. Below are practical methods and indicators for assessing success:

1. Website Traffic Monitoring

The first and most direct way to assess the success of the website is by monitoring website traffic using tools like Google Analytics or Simple Analytics. These tools provide detailed statistics, including the number of visitors per day, week, or month, the most visited pages (such as admissions or academic calendar), and user behaviours like how long visitors stay on each page. For example, if the admissions page receives high traffic during enrolment periods, this indicates that parents and students are using the website for its intended purpose. A steady or growing number of visitors over time is a strong indicator that the website is increasing the school’s visibility.

2. Increased Online Admission Activities

Another important indicator is the number of inquiries and application form downloads from the admissions page. If the school provides a digital admission form or contact section, the administration can track how many people submit forms online or call the school after visiting the website. This can be done through a simple database or email notification system. If the number of digital submissions grows compared to the previous manual system, it means the website is making the admission process easier and more accessible for new families.

3. Feedback from Parents and Students

Collecting direct feedback from the users of the website is a valuable way to measure its effectiveness. The school can distribute short surveys to parents, students, and even teachers, asking them questions like: "Was the website helpful?", "Could you find the information you needed?", or "Do you have suggestions for improvement?" This feedback can be gathered during parent teacher meetings, via school WhatsApp groups, or directly through the website. Consistently positive feedback shows that users find the website useful, while constructive criticism helps improve its content and layout.

4. Increase in School Visits and Inquiries Referencing the Website

Reception staff and the admissions team should also be trained to ask new visitors or callers how they found out about the school. If many people say they discovered the school through its website, this shows that the website is successfully reaching and attracting new audiences. Tracking this feedback helps the school understand the website’s role in influencing decision-making among prospective students and parents.

5. Active Use and Maintenance of Website Content

A successful website must be regularly updated. Mr. Mayiga should ensure that the academic calendar, school news, announcements, and contact details are accurate and timely. The administration can create a simple schedule or assign a staff member responsible for maintaining the website’s content. If updates are made consistently, and no broken links or outdated information are found, it reflects a functional, well-managed communication platform.

6. Social Media Link Engagement

If the school shares its website link on social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, or Instagram, the number of link clicks and post engagements can also serve as a success indicator. For example, if a Facebook post about admissions that links to the school website receives many likes, comments, and shares, this indicates that the online community is engaging with the content. It also shows that social media is effectively supporting the website’s outreach goals.

7. Community Recognition and Awareness

Lastly, the school can assess its website’s success by asking members of the broader community—such as local leaders, religious groups, or alumni—if they’ve seen or used the website. This can be done through informal discussions, community meetings, or events. If more people in the surrounding areas are aware of the school’s website and mention it positively, then the site is helping to improve the school’s reputation and visibility.