
# MITS4001

# Business Information Systems

## Assignment

**March 2020**

## *Major Project (Group Assignment) - 30% (Due Session 12)*

The assessment assess the following learning outcomes:

1. Adapt information systems to strategically achieve organisational goals and be able to design, develop and manage IT systems implementation to achieve Business IT Alignment.
2. Develop an IT Plan that designs, implements and manages the technology supporting these information systems including computing devices, storage and processing (both systems processing and application processing).
3. Identify, synthesize and model individual functions of a database system to be used for organization data management and decision making.
4. Apply appropriate eCommerce or mCommerce business operations and activities that contribute to effective business productivity.
5. Appraise an organization's competitive position by applying standards approaches and analyse activities/issues in recruitment, employment relations and performance management and explore emerging business trends through study of published research work.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

In this assignment, a scenario is presented in the form of a case study, "Child Support Agency and the CS2 Information System". Based on the groups understanding on the scenario, students are asked to write a report answering the questions at the end of this assignment. The report should be approximately 1800-2000 words long and needs to be uploaded in Moodle by the due date.

**Submission Guidelines**

All submissions are to be submitted through turn-it-in. Drop-boxes linked to turn-it-in will be set up in the Unit of Study Moodle account. Assignments not submitted through these drop-boxes will not be considered.
Submissions must be made by the due date and time (which will be in the session detailed above) and determined by the Unit facilitator. Submissions made after the due date and time will be penalized at the rate of 10% per day (including weekend days).

The turn-it-in similarity score will be used in determining the level if any of plagiarism. ***Turn-it-in will check conference web-sites, Journal articles, the Web and your own class member submissions for plagiarism***. You can see your turn-it-in similarity score when you submit your assignment to the appropriate drop-box. If this is a concern you will have a chance to change

your assignment and re-submit. ***However, re-submission is only allowed prior to the submission due date and time***. After the due date and time have elapsed you cannot make re-submissions and you will have to live with the similarity score as there will be no chance for changing. Thus, plan early and submit early to take advantage of this feature. You can make multiple submissions, but please remember we only see the last submission, and the date and time you submitted will be taken from that submission.
Your document should be a single word or pdf document containing your report.

## Case Study: Child Support Agency and the CS2 Information System

Electronic Data Systems (EDS) won the contract to develop an information system known as CS2 to support the work of the newly created Child Support Agency (CSA) in the United Kingdom. It is claimed that the failure of this information system contributed to the closure of the CSA and cost the UK taxpayer over a billion pounds sterling (DWP, 2006).
The CSA was a UK Government Executive Agency and was part of the Department for Work and Pensions in Great Britain and the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland. The agency was launched on April 5, 1993 and was responsible for implementing the 1991 Child Support Act and subsequent legislation.
Child support, or child maintenance, is the contribution from a non-resident parent towards the financial cost of raising off spring. Maintenance is paid to the person with whom the child lives. The level and conditions of payment can either be mutually agreed between the two parties, or, in case of disagreement, decided by legal means.
The CSA as originally conceived was a government organisation whose primary purpose was information handling. For instance, the CSA was expected to:

- Receive and assess applications for child maintenance. This involved identifying and locating non-resident parents and confirming paternity.
- Calculate the payments to be made by non-resident parents. This involved establishing the non-resident parent's income or benefits status, determining the existence of children in the non-resident parent's current household and confirming levels of shared care.
- Maintain the accuracy of maintenance assessments. Any changes informed to the circumstances of the caring parent or the non-resident parent demanded recalculation of the maintenance payable.
- Collect money from non-resident parents and pay such money to the parent with care. This normally involved establishing a payment schedule with both parties.
- Enforce assessments. The agency was expected to chase missing payments and collect debt, which may have built up.

After its creation in the early 1990s the CSA experienced difficulties in administering child support. This was apparently due to the complex rules embedded in the originating legislation that the agency was required to administer.

In 2000 a new system of child support was introduced with the aim of simplifying the rules for child support and including a simplified calculation of maintenance. It was decided that the substantial business restructuring caused by these changes were to be supported by the introduction of a new ICT system.

In 2004, EDS was criticised by the UK's National Audit Office for its work on ICT system for the CSA. This work ran seriously over budget and was over two years late in delivery despite following the gateway review process mandated for the management of large projects of this nature and having spent over 91 million on external advice. These problems eventually led to the resignation of the CSA's head since the blame for this failure was laid partly at the door of the CSA. It was claimed that they did not have sufficient internal technical staff to be an 'intelligent customer' of EDS. Consequently, it took some time to establish an effective partnership between the CSA and EDS.

Following its introduction in March 2003 the CSA experienced problems with the operation of the new ICT system. The system somehow managed to overpay 1.9 million people and underpay around 700,000. This meant that the CSA was obliged to write off 1 billion in claims; while 750 million in child support payments from absent parents remained uncollected. An internal EDS memo was leaked that admit-ted that the system was 'badly designed, badly tested and badly implemented'.

Claims were made that this failure was partly due to the way in which a large and complex ICT system, at the upper end of what was achievable at the time, was introduced at the same time as attempts were being made to restructure the CSA.

In the period between 1993 and 2003 the CSA estimated that it had collected over 5 billion in maintenance payments and administered over 1.5 million live cases in 2006.

In December 2006, the Department of Work and Pension released its Child Support white paper outlining its plans for the future of Child Support. It was announced by John Hutton MP that the CSA would be shut down, and replaced by the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission (C-MEC). This will be a non-departmental public body, therefore removed from the direct control of the Department of Work and Pensions.

## Tasks

- Critically analyse the CS2 system designed by EDS, and highlight the major flaws of the system.
- Could business process re-engineering be a useful tool in maximising the potential of the CS2 system? Explain and justify your answers.
- Develop an alternate, simplified plan for the child support program, considering all the key requirements.
- Evaluate the benefits the government may derive from the alternate simplified plan.

**Marking Guide: 75 Marks**

| Task | Description | Marks |
|---|---|---|
| Introduction | This section should include a few sentences which provide an outline of the assignment. | 5 |
| Report Layout | The report style, language and structure should be appropriate. | 5 |
| Critique | • Critically analyse the CS2 system designed by EDS, and highlight the major flaws of the system.<br>• Could business process re-engineering be a useful tool in maximising the potential of the CS2 system? Explain and justify your answers. | 20 |
| Develop | Develop an alternate, simplified plan for the child support program, considering all the key requirements:<br>1. Computational requirements<br>2. Processing requirements<br>3. DBMS<br>4. eCommerce/mCommerce<br>5. Maintenance | 25 |
| Evaluate | Evaluate the benefits the government may derive from the alternate simplified plan. | 10 |
| Conclusion | Summary of the report. | 5 |
| References | Follow the IEEE style | 5 |